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The Week

MUSSOLINI last week completed the conquest of Ethiopia by annexing the country and officially declaring that Italy is no longer a kingdom but an empire. While the process of "pacification" may take years, all organized opposition is at an end, at least so far as the late Ethiopian government is concerned. Marshal Badoglio is made Ethiopian Viceroy and General Graziani has been raised to the rank of Marshal. The question of what the League is to do in view of the terrific blow to its prestige remained undecided as the other nations at Geneva waited on France, where a new government is being born, and England, where the old government cannot make up its mind. The British addressed to Hitler an elaborate questionnaire regarding his future intentions, a questionnaire that he perhaps will not answer and one that will have little meaning even if he does. In essence, the queries are: Will you in future live up to the treaties you have made? Will you sign an air pact? Will you negotiate non-aggression treaties with Russia, Latvia and Esthonia? The new German dirigible "Hindenburg" opened the era of commercial flights across the North Atlantic by carrying fifty-one paying passengers and a large amount of freight from Germany to the United States in an uneventful voyage of less than sixty-two hours. As former Premier Azaña was chosen new President of Spain, reports from France indicated that Leon Blum, Socialist, would be Premier in the new government of the People's Front. The United States Conference of Mayors refused to attend an international gathering of local authorities, meeting in Berlin, on the ground that the Nazis have obliterated self-government.

THE United States Senate last week wrestled with the tax bill, without giving any clear indication of what its final form will be. Washington believes, however, that the present taxes on corporate income will be retained and extended, and that the tax on undivided corporate surplus will be made a small, graduated levy for a brief period as an experiment. The Frazier-Lemke bill, which would refinance farm mortgages through a special $3,000,000,000 issue of paper currency, was at last forced out for a vote in the House, but with little prospect that it will become a law. W. R. Hearst suffered a smashing defeat in California, his home state, when the Hoover forces won over the Hearst-Landon group in the Republican primary. Earl Browder, secretary of the Communist Party, predicted there will be no new Farmer-Labor Party with a national ticket this year, though state and congressional candidates will be brought forward. The threatened strike of the anthracite workers was averted with a compromise settlement leaving wages the same and reducing the work week from forty-eight to forty-two hours. Instructions were issued for a 25-percent cut in the personnel of the P.W.A. in view of Mr. Roosevelt's opposition to another large appropriation; the official Democratic doctrine appears to be that the time for pump-priming is past, except perhaps through housing under the new plan proposed by Senator Wagner. In the Methodist conference a desperate effort was made to repudiate and destroy all liberal activities of that Church in the fields of politics, economics and social legislation.

THE Federal Power Commission has just issued the report of a study showing the extent of concentration of control in the electric-power industry. This is no news; many previous studies have re-

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vealed the same large facts, but the new document is important because of its thoroughness and its official character. The industry is huge; it serves directly 100,000,000 individuals; it supplies factories with 55 percent of their power, and mines and quarries with 63 percent of theirs. Its annual income is $2,000,000,000 and it has about 250,000 employees. Almost all this immense business is—with the exception of 1,930 municipally owned establishments—controlled by about fifty-seven private systems. Twelve of the largest of these control nearly half of the country's generating capacity. The Electric Bond and Share group alone controls 11.5 percent. The industry generates about as much political power as it does mechanical. The ferocious attack which it launched at Mr. Roosevelt on account of his advocacy of the Wheeler-Rayburn utility-holding-company bill occupied the attention of the country for months. Its lobbying methods, its control of press and university, its employment of leading lawyers and its blockading of anyone who challenges it in any quarter are notorious.

TWO reforms of real importance are now before Congress. One is the Walsh bill, providing that decent wages, hours and conditions—and the other labor provisions of the N.R.A., including collective bargaining—shall be observed by concerns holding government contracts. A government that has repeatedly expressed its belief in such conditions, and that once enacted them into law for all private business, has no shadow of excuse for not enforcing them where its own purchasing power is effective. If, as is rumored, the Walsh bill has no chance of passage, this is a commentary on the sincerity of Democratic politicians, from the highest to the lowest. The other measure is the clause in the new relief bill, as passed by the House, providing that prevailing hourly wage rates shall be paid all W.P.A. workers. Failure to do so has exerted, as The New Republic predicted it would do, a tendency to reduce wages in private industry. There is no reason why the government, even if it fails in its attempt to raise wages, should act as a cutthroat competitor in its own employment. Here, the argument is made that paying higher wages means being able to extend relief to fewer persons. But that is not necessarily so; higher wages per hour may be accompanied by shorter hours. And if the government wants people on relief to have less than they could earn in private industry, it should refrain from work relief altogether and give only cash relief, as in England. Then there would at least be no depressing tendency exerted on existing labor standards.

LIKE small boys, ready to pick up their marbles and run home in a blue funk unless they are permitted to dictate the rules of the game, the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor last week vetoed the offer of the Committee for Industrial Organization to raise $500,000 to organize the steel industry. Speaking for the Council, President Green notified the steel convention in Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, that the A.F. of L. would not lift a hand to help the steel workers organize unless it were "free from interference on the part of any group or groups either within or outside the jurisdiction of the A.F. of L." In other words, the conservative leaders of the A.F. of L. are unwilling to see the steel industry organized except on a craft-union basis, even though the steel workers themselves decide that they want an industrial union. Of course, no one believes for a moment that the craft unions can ever get together for a concerted drive in steel (some have already declared that they will not participate in such a campaign), so what the Executive Council is saying in effect is that it does not want to see steel organized. It is noteworthy, in this respect, that President Green was very vague as to the actual support in money that the A.F. of L. would contribute toward an organizing drive, provided the steel workers were agreeable to craft unions. At its same meeting, the Executive Council helped to widen the split between the craft and industrial unionists by again denying to 25,000 radio workers an industrial charter.

THREE thousand members of the American Library Association met this week at Richmond, Virginia, with every prospect of a pleasant conference, except for those librarians who happen to be Negroes. Since Virginia is a Southern state, it lays certain restrictions upon members of the colored race. They were not, for example, permitted to obtain rooms or meals at the two chief hotels used by the convention, the John Marshall and the Jefferson. They were graciously permitted to go in the front door of the convention hall, the Mosque Auditorium, and to attend the sessions of the Association which took place there—provided, however, that when these sessions included a breakfast, lunch or dinner, the Negro delegates should rise and pass from the room when the first whiff of the odor of soup reached their nostrils. The explanation is made, rather plaintively, that these restrictions were not the fault of the A.L.A. but part of a law of Virginia. Query: Why should any civilized association, with Negro members, undertake to hold a convention in Virginia or any other state that makes such distinctions?

MR. Bruce Barton, the eminent advertising man, writer of syndicated editorials and author of uplifting books, has been engaged on a part-time basis to help the National Republican Committee to win next November's election. Washington gossip says this is an hysterical attempt by the Committee to cover up its bad mistake in appointing the Brain-Trust-That-Is-Not-a-Brain-Trust-But-Looks-Like-One. Washington gossip also says that the author of "The Man Nobody Knows" is just the person to publicize Governor Landon. Such

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gossip is far from fair to Mr. Barton. Surely the man who sold the country the idea that Christ was a Rotarian and Mr. Coolidge a warm, impulsive, friendly fellow is just the person to take over the job of convincing the country that our collective destiny should now be put into the hands of Smith, Raskob, Ogden Mills, the du Ponts and other great Republicans as of 1936.

TRANSATLANTIC aerial navigation has taken another step forward with the successful completion of the "Hindenburg's" first trip to the United States in a new west-bound record time of sixty-one and a half hours. The new ship is to make ten round trips this summer, a first effort for regular commercial service. It seems unfortunate, however, that this achievement comes at a time when the one man who has shown himself consistently capable of safe lighter-than-air navigation should be refused by his own government the credit and honor he deserves for his large share in it. Dr. Hugo Eckener, having opposed the Nazis before they came to power, having won a libel suit against a Nazi editor, and, most recently, having declined to name the new Zeppelin for Hitler, was therefore not the captain of the "Hindenburg," and assisted in command only in the capacity of commodore of the Zeppelin fleet. His part in the flight has been steadily overlooked by the German press, and his name rarely mentioned. The barbaric attitude of the Nazi regime toward men of scientific achievement has often been illustrated, but no more thoroughly than in this example of a man who once was publicly, and to many Germans must still be, a distinguished hero.

ACADEMIC freedom is dealt a blow in the failure to reappoint Morris U. Schappes to the tutorial staff of the College of the City of New York. Mr. Schappes has been teaching in the English department for eight years, has been awarded annual and voluntary increases in salary, has distinguished himself not only in his classroom work but also in articles and reviews in various literary magazines, and this year was voted by the senior class as the "most popular" and "most respected" member of the teaching faculty. He was a founder of the City College unit of the Teachers' Union, has taken an active part in the fight against war and fascism, and twice has addressed assemblies of students on the occasion of the students' peace strikes. It was, in fact, the day following the peace demonstration this spring that Schappes received from the newly appointed chairman of the English department a curt notice that his "efficiency as a teacher of English has not been sufficiently notable to justify" his reappointment. President Robinson of City College has asserted that no political motives were at work in the Schappes case and that the tutor was not discharged, because recommendations of a chairman of a department are advisory rather than mandatory. The finest way to prove both contentions would be to reappoint Schappes immediately.

BEWARE of dictators when they talk of civil liberties—a bit of caution that one may well apply just now to Brazil. When the Brazilian Congress convened on May 4, President Getulio Vargas offered a partial relaxation of martial law and issued a decree restoring parliamentary immunities. Members of the Congress rightly pointed out, however, that so long as one senator and four members of the Chamber of Deputies remain in custody because of exercising their constitutional rights of free speech, any talk of immunity must be sheer mockery. General Vargas is continuing his campaign of systematic abolition of labor unions, trial and prosecution of all persons suspected of radical sympathies and open encouragement of the fascist anti-Semitic organization, the Integralistas. Luis Carlos Prestes, leader of the National Liberation Alliance, is in prison, along with an estimated 17,000 liberals, intellectuals and trade unionists. Victor Barron, an American, was listed as a suicide under circumstances that have caused impartial investigators to hint strongly at police murder. What Brazil needs is not pious hypocrisy from a Dictator-President, but a genuine restoration of civil rights.

Taxation Sense and Nonsense

AS THE administration proposal to tax corporate surpluses runs the gauntlet of Congress, a great deal of attack has centered upon it, and the measure itself has become subject to many kinds of change. Much of this opposition is pervaded with more emotion than would seem to be justified by the content of the argument. It suggests that what is really disliked is not the specific character of this bill, but rather any proposal to tax wealth. What new taxes would not arouse much the same ill tempered hostility on the part of corporation executives, lawyers and big newspaper editors except a sales or other excise levy burdening chiefly the poor?

Not every opponent, however, has been so reckless, and there is plenty of room for legitimate argument about a novel principle of taxation applied to so complex an economic structure as ours. Let us assess a few of the more serious complaints, in the light of the bill as actually passed by the House of Representatives.

The Complexity of the Bill.—In an effort to meet objections, the House Committee finally produced a draft that is so complex as to be incomprehensible to anybody but a taxation mathematician or a super-accountant, and perhaps not even clear to them. While rigid simplicity cannot be expected of any effective federal tax law, this one is probably far too intricate for successful administration, since successful administration depends to a large extent on the understanding and coöperation of the taxpayer. If it is desired to retain the principle involved, a bill can surely be written less riddled with

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complexities and exemptions, without much injustice to corporations or injury to the economic status.

The Yield of the Taxes.—Mr. George O. May of Price, Waterhouse and Company, one of the leading corporation accountants of the country, has testified that the bill would not produce the additional yield expected by the Treasury, and very likely would produce no more than the present law. Estimates of tax yield are in the realm of speculation, but Mr. May is as good an estimator as any, and his opinion carries great weight. The good chance that he is right makes it imperative to retain the present tax on total corporate net income, and probably to enlarge it. In addition we may experiment with a tax on undivided surplus, if that is desirable on other grounds.

Alleged Injustices to Stockholders.—Under the present law, stockholders with large incomes may avoid paying surtaxes on dividends (which are exempt only from the normal rate in personal incomes) by keeping profits undistributed in corporate surplus. Holding corporations of a personal nature, with one or a few stockholders, are formed for this particular purpose. But Mr. George O. May, who approves of the attempt to end this kind of tax avoidance, makes the point that many important corporations were not organized for this purpose, have a wide distribution of stockholders, and decide their surplus policies with other ends in view—ends such as the best interests of the corporation itself and the stake of the small stockholders in its stability. In such cases heavy taxation of undivided surplus would be unjust to small stockholders. Mr. May therefore pleads for a careful study of the different types of corporations and for different treatment of them, according to their nature.

We believe there is a valid answer to this argument. Whatever the motives of any corporation in accumulating surplus, those of its stockholders who have large incomes do now avoid surtaxes, to the extent that it does not distribute its profits. It is the effect, not the motive, in which we ought to be interested. Inquiry into motive is a subjective matter, impossible to effectuate in practical administration. As for the small stockholders in these companies, it is not unjust to make them pay extra taxes (through their corporations) for the increase in capital value that their shares are likely to experience by virtue of the saving and reinvestment of profits. If this requires abolition of the tax on capital gains on sales of stock, to avoid double taxation, such a readjustment would be possible.

Discrimination Against Small Corporations.—It is often said that the big corporations are not against the bill, since it would restrict competition from small and growing concerns. The big firms have already achieved their size; the small ones, whose aim is to grow by reinvestment of profits, would be hampered by the tax. If this is the attitude of large corporation executives, they are singularly inconsistent. For another argument against the bill is that all corporations, large as well as small, need surplus as a cushion for depression. To say that the big ones have already built their surpluses is a silly reply, because it assumes that the surpluses will never be depleted. Furthermore, the expectation that a surplus tax would prevent any growth of small competitors that would otherwise occur, is sure to be disappointed. Under present conditions, a small corporation must, in order to grow in competition with a large one, be so much more efficient that it can sell better goods or sell goods more cheaply, or both, and at the same time have enough profit to lay aside for enlargement of plant. Its sales would be expanding and its profit would be ample. Any such concern, if a tax compelled it to distribute all its profit, could surely obtain new capital through stock issues. If, as is often the case, it were owned wholly or in large part by a small group, these controlling stockholders could put their dividends back into the concern just as easily as they can now vote to leave profit undistributed.

Encouragement of Large and Rigid Debts.—Mr. A. Wilfred May, the stock-market authority who recently contributed an article to The New Republic on the latest Wall Street boom, argues that a tax of this nature would encourage the bad American corporate habit of incurring large fixed debts for capital purposes, without ever paying the money back. When bond issues come due, they are frequently refunded; the debt piles up and goes on forever—until it becomes topheavy and is repudiated. Large bonded indebtedness gives rise to large fixed charges, which tend to make costs rigid and to make adjustment to changed situations difficult. Such debts can be amortized only by the building up of reserves out of profits. But the tax penalizes undistributed profits.

An attempt to allow credit for amortization of debt in the phrasing of the law was in turn attacked by John T. Flynn in last week's New Republic, on the ground that it favored the improvident corporation that had borrowed heavily, against the thrifty one that had no debt to meet.

Both these arguments seem to us to lay too much stress on the possible effect of the tax. Without any tax on undistributed profits, the bad habit of incurring large fixed indebtedness has grown up, and there is no assurance that, if this bill were not passed, surplus profits would be used for debt amortization any more than at present. As for Mr. Flynn's point, it seems to us that the discrimination is unimportant. Since the tax is on profits, it would have no effect on costs or ability to compete. The clause in question simply says to an indebted corporation: If you use your profits to lay aside surplus for expansion, they will be taxed extra, but if you use them to pay off your debt, they will not be

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taxed extra. The corporation that has no debt, on the other hand, can use its surplus to expand, if it is willing to pay the tax. If not, it can pay larger dividends. It suffers no real disadvantage for not having a debt to pay. Rather it enjoys all the ordinary advantage of lower fixed charges.

The Cushion Argument.—The commonest and superficially the most telling argument of all is that corporations should, like individuals, be encouraged to save as much as possible. In good times, savings enable them to expand and thus help business; in bad times, savings enable them to weather the storm, to avoid bankruptcy, and thus to safeguard capital and provide more employment for labor. We dealt with this argument briefly in our editorial of March 15. It seems to us to be an exact reversal of good economic policy for the country as a whole. Strangely enough, what appears to be the weightiest argument for the bill has hardly been discussed.

The analogy with individual saving is a bad one. What seems to be good for corporations as individuals is often bad for the economy as a whole. In good times it is possible to save and reinvest too large a part of profits. When corporations have the power to expand by reinvestment of their own profit, they are likely to overestimate the future demand for their goods. Even though the system as a whole may not save too much, particular enterprises may and often do so, creating fatal unbalance in the structure. It would at least be some safeguard against this tendency if in good times corporations were forced to go to the capital market with offerings of stock when they wanted to expand. They would thus have to subject their plans to the scrutiny of the individual investors and to whatever publicity and regulation the S.E.C. could enforce.

It is still more important that large corporations should not be able to offer too much resistance to the pressure for readjustment when depression comes. It is a fundamental of the theory of capitalism that prices and capital values should be flexible, that they should bend easily and quickly in order to avoid a break. When demand falls off, prices should drop. When a depression comes, inflated capital structures should be deflated; high-cost competitors should be eliminated. The more easily and quickly necessary readjustments take place, the smaller is the general effect, the quicker the recovery. Stability for individual businesses adds up into rigidity for the whole structure. As with good automobile springs and shock absorbers, the more the elasticity to road shocks, the less the amplitude of the jolts.

In this depression, perhaps the most striking phenomenon has been the rigidity of large industry. Industrial prices fell with difficulty, and far less than prices of crops. Corporations with big surpluses kept on paying interest and dividends, and postponing financial reorganization. Because individually they seemed secure, they resisted adjustment of prices and values. The result was, of course, a calamitous drop of production and employment, a long and dangerous depression. The total volume of employment would have been larger if more corporations had been forced, like the farmers, to charge less as demand for their products fell. If surpluses had been less ample, if bondholders and stockholders had been earlier in danger, corporations would have had to adjust more quickly and completely, with ultimate benefit to all.

We ourselves doubt whether modern capitalism can ever become flexible enough to endure the strains to which it subjects itself. It is fatally ill with arteriosclerosis. But those who hope to save it do little good by helping to make it stiffer.

Can the League Survive?

THE Italian victory in Ethiopia is the most serious blow that the League of Nations has ever received. For the first time in its history it made a formal attempt to stop a war. And that attempt has failed, chiefly because Great Britain and France did not dare to take all possible measures against Italy for fear that Mussolini, in desperation, might declare war on them. The world is now faced with the most important international problems in two decades: will the League survive? If so, in what form? If not, what is to take its place? Is a new general European war made more or less likely by the events of the past ten days?

While prophecy is always dangerous and usually futile, a few points can be made with relative assurance. The League has now become a center for a good many social and humanitarian activities: the International Labor Office, post-office arrangements, the Opium Commission, the international fight against white slavery and the like. It is hard to imagine a breakdown so complete that these services would be suspended, the doors of the buildings in Geneva locked and the whole machinery of the League scrapped. At least a skeletal organization is likely to go on, with the possibility that at some future time it may be expanded into a more powerful device.

The part of the League that is now dead is, in short, that which never existed. We hardly need to point out again that the chief nations in the League never gave more than lip service to its supposed principles, never abandoned any nationalistic policy that ran counter to the League's obligations. To the French it was a device to enforce the unjust terms of the treaties of 1919, and the British acquiesced in this since in general such a policy suited their own plans. It is nonsense to say, as many pro-League Americans have done, that everything would have been well if the United States had only joined. You do not improve a barrel of rotten apples by adding a sound one—even if it be assumed that the American apple was in fact untainted, which is open to grave question. It is equally unrealistic to suppose, as the League of Nations Association of the United States apparently does, that

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this is a good moment to demand a new and world-wide league, founded on the Kellogg Pact and involving "arrangements for peaceful modification of the status quo and for the advancement of social and economic justice." On the tombstone of European hopes might be carved the words "Too late." Ten years ago it is barely possible that such plans might have been put into effect. It is hopeless to propose them in a world of governments such as exist today, particularly in Germany, Italy and Japan.

If Europe, in the coming months and years, follows the path indicated by recent history, no serious attempt will be made to revise the Covenant. Those sections of it which provide for the collective enforcement of peace will remain a dead letter as they have been from the beginning of the League's history, until Mussolini's Mediterranean and African policy began, a few months ago, to seem a real threat to the British Empire. The system of new alliances in Europe, which had begun long before the Italian crisis, will go on apace. Germany and Italy will compete for control of Central and Southeastern Europe, with the likelihood that Germany will win, unless Great Britain intervenes decisively to stop her. Latin America, disheartened by the breakdown at Geneva, may perhaps pay some real attention to Mr. Roosevelt's ideas about a "Pan-American League of Nations." The drift toward war between Soviet Russia and Germany is likely to go on, with at least a possibility that Japan and Poland will be allied with Germany, and France and the Little Entente with Russia. Perhaps the greatest danger of the near future is that the Tory government of Great Britain may accept Hitler's specious plea that he offers a "bulwark against Bolshevism" and align itself with the Fascists of Germany and Italy.

The best hope for peace in Europe continues to be the coming to power of Left governments in the greatest possible number of countries and the shortest possible period of time. The reason Soviet Russia today represents the smallest threat to peace of all the great powers of the world is because there is no powerful individual or group that has anything to gain from aggression. The same thing is true, generally speaking, of the new People's Front government in France. Even the two former Labor Cabinets in Great Britain, inadequate and unsatisfactory as they were in many ways, provided a cornerstone for peace that has been sadly lacking in Western Europe since 1931. The grim lesson of the League's failure is that peace machinery is of no value unless it is backed by good will, that pretensions of pacifism mean nothing until they are supported by the abandonment of aggressive national policies and that a new *modus vivendi* among the nations cannot be improvised overnight. In a real sense, the League is not dead because it has never been born. It never will be born until it represents the aspiration of the common people of many lands for peace and freedom.

America's New Gadget

WE HEREBY predict that the next great American gadget will be the parking meter. This device, which first appeared a few months ago in Oklahoma, has already spread to Texas, Florida and Michigan and seems likely to sweep the country.

In operation it is the height of simplicity. In the congested downtown district of a city, the pavement is marked off into parking spaces. At the pavement's edge, in each space, there is mounted a parking meter; when a five-cent piece is dropped into it, it displays a green flag for one hour, at the end of which time the flag changes to red. If the police find your car in a space opposite a red flag, you get a ticket for parking overtime. If you wish to park longer than one hour, you return before your time is up and put in another nickel.

The revenue from these meters is said to be amazingly large; they pay for themselves in a few months, and thereafter they pour money into the city treasury. In the cities where they are used, they have done away with the "parking hog"—the man who arrives at 8 A.M. and leaves his car in a busy area all day long. People who haven't got a nickel keep driving around the streets until they find a space vacated by someone who paid his nickel and did not use up his full hour. Traffic congestion has been enormously lightened; stores are more accessible to potential customers, which is good for business; the revenue from the meters helps curtail taxation. Very few motorists complain of the scheme and many, it is said, warmly approve of it.

Herbert Hoover and others have long been looking for some new gadget (such as that of air conditioning) which might bring the country out of the depression as, according to their interpretation, the radio ended the slump in the early nineteen twenties. We wait with unbated breath for some crackpot economist to come forward and tell us that we can hold back air conditioning to end the next depression—that of 1940-50—and that this time, the parking meter will tick along to the rescue.

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The King Is Naked

THE APPEARANCE of two new biographies[1] of William Randolph Hearst, coming after Mrs. Fremont Older's authorized study of his life, throws a lurid spotlight on one of the queerest careers in American history. Under it Hearst appears in many complex roles—as a baffled politician and a run-of-the-mill rich man's spoiled son, as a conspirator, war-maker, journalist and mining operator—but it principally reveals him, stripped of the myths he has built up around himself, as one of the clumsiest manipulators of inherited power who has ever disgraced his class.

In its broad outlines, his story is very simple. He was born seventy-three years ago this April in San Francisco. His parents were of solid Southern slave-owning stock—his father, George Hearst, had inherited three farms, four slaves and a country store before he headed West during the gold rush; his mother was the daughter of the richest farmer in Franklin County, Missouri. George Hearst was a typical promoter and speculator who made his fortune in three great purchases: the Gould and Ophir silver mines in Nevada, the Homestake, the biggest gold mine in the country, in South Dakota, and the Anaconda in Montana. He was paid $50,000 for giving his opinion on a mine. His holdings included a cattle ranch of 250,000 acres in New Mexico, great timber stands in northern California, ranches and mines covering a thousand square miles of the Republic of Mexico. George Hearst was a pro-slavery member of the California Legislature and voted against ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment after the Civil War.

William Randolph Hearst was the son of one of the wealthiest men in the country, a tenacious defender of feudal, slave-owning traditions. In the prosperous years after his birth the family lived on Taylor Street, Nob Hill, in one of those barbaric mansions that Henry Adams described as the queerest habitations ever conceived by the mind of man. He went to grammar school at a time when San Francisco was the toughest city in the country, with a thousand murders a year to its credit. He was fourteen when general hell broke loose among the lower classes: the California Workingmen's Party elected its candidates in Sacramento and Oakland and, campaigning for a new state constitution, won its fight, dominated the convention and put over the most liberal constitution of any state in the union—a fact that helps to explain both the strength of the reform movement and the violence of the reactionaries in California. The Hearsts were living on Nob Hill during the great riots of 1877, when (ten years after industrial capitalists got control of the federal government) the unrest throughout the country had reached the proportions of civil war. The riots in San Francisco were more serious than any others except those in Pittsburgh.

William Randolph Hearst was sent to St. Paul's School in Concord, New Hampshire, the year after this agitation reached a climax. Apparently he was expelled, although accounts differ. He then studied under private tutors and entered Harvard when he was nineteen. He was expelled three years later after having, as part of some joke whose significance remains unclear, given each faculty member a chamber pot. When he was twenty-four he became editor and owner of The San Francisco Examiner, which his father had purchased and built up as an instrument in his political campaigns. It was the strongest Democratic paper in the state, with a circulation of 30,000. Thus William Randolph Hearst began his career in the decisive year of 1887, right after the Haymarket riots, after the drive for the eight-hour day, after the Knights of Labor had increased their strength from 104,000 to 700,000 members in the space of a few months. Judged relatively with the number of men employed, that was a much more impressive increase in the strength of organized labor, especially in heavy industry, than was gained after the introduction of the N.R.A. It aroused a comparable disquiet in the minds of the millionaires of that time. In fact, right after Hearst had been expelled from Harvard, and when he was in New York studying the newspapers there, The New York Sun made a sensational exposé of the Knights, advancing the thesis that its officers controlled the livelihood of 2,500,000 workers, could halt industry at will and had more power than the President.

In Hearst's own environment of San Francisco, although his biographers do not mention it, the air was tense with recent and potential conflict. The unions were growing. The Federated Trades Council had recently been formed; The Pacific Coast Boycotter, which mobilized union men to fight two non-union papers, had gained a circulation of 40,000 and won its battle. There had been two

[1] Hearst: Lord of San Simeon, by Oliver Carlson and Ernest Sutherland Bates. New York: The Viking Press. 332 pages. $3.
Imperial Hearst: A Social Biography, by Ferdinand Lundberg. Introduction by Charles A. Beard. New York: Equinox Cooperative Press. 406 pages. $2.75.
There is suprisingly little duplication in these two books. "Lord of San Simeon" is easier reading, but much less detailed than "Imperial Hearst." It contains some shrewd observations on Hearst's psychology and a fine account of his parents' early life in the West. "Imperial Hearst" is particularly distinguished for its exhaustive analysis of Hearst's business enterprises aside from his publishing ventures, for its study of the bloody circulation war in Chicago and the relation of this war to the rise of the gangsters in that city, for its bold and on the whole convincing discussions of Hearst's tie up with Hitler and the economic basis of his traditional anti-British, pro-German policy. While neither book plays up the notorious scandals in Hearst's private life, "Lord of San Simeon" gives enough of the picture to throw some light on Hearst's mental processes.

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powerful street-car strikes shortly before Hearst took over The Examiner; the Coast Seamen's Union had recently been organized with 2,200 members and had won recognition up and down the coast. A lock-out of the seamen had led to agitation—which was unsuccessful but widely supported—for a citywide general strike. In short, the mood of both capital and labor in San Francisco was not unlike that which prevails there now—or maybe the alarm of the capitalists was greater then, for they had no long record of triumph over organized labor to comfort them.

In this situation the young Hearst, barely out of his irresponsible teens, "tall, bashful, pallid and blue-eyed . . . with a straggly straw-colored mustache and a high-pitched voice," appeared not so much a menace as a distraction. He bought two yachts and took over the family summer home at Sausalito. He gave wild parties for his staff and seems to have been indifferent to the scandals that grew up around him, or to have enjoyed the various kinds of sensation he made. He loved to fly kites and toy balloons and to set off fireworks; and when the Del Monte Hotel on the Monterey peninsula burned to the ground he chartered a special train and took a whole staff down to watch the fire and write it up for an extra the next day. He had money to burn. He brought the power of wealth into a trade, formerly somewhat disreputable, that had always been run on a shoestring. He hired talent at wages his competitors—whose moral standards and social visions were on a par with his—could not match. He contributed to journalism the technique of distraction; he thought up stunts. One of his reporters pulled a fake faint on Market Street in order to expose the city hospitals. Two others interviewed a couple of escaped bandits in the mountains, when the police could not locate them. His newspaper kept alive the declining anti-Chinese agitation of the previous decade, at a time when the Hearst family was the biggest employer of Chinese labor in California.

Behind this façade of sensationalism and subsidized vulgarity, Hearst developed another type of journalism. When he made Sam Chamberlain managing editor of The Examiner it meant that the paper was to belong to the Parisian as opposed to the Anglo-Saxon tradition of what a newspaper was for. The Anglo-Saxon tradition, says Mr. Lundberg, "far from perfect and twisted beyond recognition" nevertheless required "a certain sobriety of statement, an adherence to matters of general public interest and some relation to facts." But Parisian newspapers were then even more frankly than now the papers of parties, groups and special interests, inspired behind the scenes and with policies and news angles manipulated according to the needs of their backers. Under Sam Chamberlain's guidance The Examiner went after San Francisco's political bosses and exposed their alliance with the underworld so thoroughly that they fled. Hearst and a group of Democrats then developed a political apparatus to replace them, the reward of The Examiner being a contract for all city and county printing and for the publication of official notices. The Examiner also carried on a campaign against the Southern Pacific, as the dominant and most bitterly hated monopoly in California of that period, but it ended suddenly and mysteriously, and Hearst was afterwards denounced in Congress and by a rival paper for having agreed to lay off the Southern Pacific in return for $30,000 of advertising.

Hearst's father died in 1892. Mr. Lundberg estimates his fortune at about $17,000,000, but Messrs. Carlson and Bates, who tend to magnify Hearst's power (Mr. Lundberg constantly calls attention to the weak spots in his empire), set it at close to $50,000,000. By that time The Examiner was carrying on a bold campaign against the bicycle menace. Hearst had grown weary of it and spent much of his time abroad. He seems to have been snubbed and offended in some unforgivable way in England; and he seems to have begun, in this period, to give a free rein to the caprices that became his distinguishing characteristic, wiring all sorts of confusing and contradictory orders to the men who were doing his work. He bought The New York Journal for $180,000 in the fall of 1895, obviously, in view of his subsequent course, in preparation for the campaign the next year. His mother sold her share of the Anaconda mine to stake him, getting $7,500,000 from the Rothschilds. From a business point of view it was a blunder. In 1929 the Anaconda produced 40 percent of the world's copper and during the War it made enormous profits, while his copper mines in Peru, and his papers as well, were losing money hand over fist.

It cost Hearst $7 a reader to build the circulation of The Journal from 20,000 to 150,000. He brought to New York journalism the same qualities of distraction he had contributed in San Francisco, outdoing Pulitzer in sensationalism, hiring Pulitzer's stars, including Brisbane, away from him. When a midwife killed her husband, The Journal reporters rented the entire house around her flat, isolated her, closed the area to other reporters and developed the case as a continued story in one edition after another until its news value was exhausted and the police took charge. That was typical. Then The Journal took the lead in selling all sorts of fancy scientific misinformation, phony accounts of freaks, clean-up campaigns whose principal value was that they provided opportunities for discussion of the vices that were to be cleaned up.

But Hearst supported Bryan in 1896. It was a popular move that ran the circulation of The Journal up to 995,000. In that fierce campaign he took a stand comparable to what support of Sinclair in California would have meant in 1934. Why did he do it? He was once quoted to Barron as having said, "Isn't it better that I should represent in this country the dissatisfied, than have somebody else do

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it, that might not have the same property relations that I have?" It was certainly better for Hearst, even if it was of dubious value for the dissatisfied, for his support of Bryan left him with a reputation as a friend of the common man that stayed with him until McKinley's assassination and Roosevelt's denunciation of him as primarily responsible for it.

These were the years of his triumph, the only period, indeed, when things were going his way and he had a measure of control of events. He busied himself with the campaign to free Cuba. He lived in New York at the Hoffman House and went in for some gilded-age display while his stooges made up atrocity stories about the cruelty of the Spanish troops, rescued the beautiful Evangelina Cisneros from what was presented to readers as almost a mass assault by the entire Spanish army, and hurled insults and taunts at the stricken empire of the South that was waiting for its death blow. The timing of this campaign to free Cuba is interesting. It began with the panic of 1893, with the nationwide Pullman strike, the sensational growth of the Railwaymen's Union under Debs's leadership, the developing strength of the Populist movement. But it did not become urgent until after the campaign of 1896, when the popular will of the people had been thwarted by the device of the electoral college. Then Hearst called for war more loudly than he ever demanded anything except his own election.

It is customary to consider Hearst's role in bringing about the Spanish-American War as proof of his power and of the power of the sort of machinery he controlled. The impression conveyed by these two biographies, however, despite the attitudes of their authors, is that Hearst was playing a reckless and hazardous game, and that he succeeded in it, not because of his skill or ruthlessness, but because of the inertia and ineptness of the Spanish representatives in this country. You see that he often got himself so far out on a limb that any diplomats except the grandees of a feudal empire could have made his position precarious. They busied themselves, however, with indiscreet complaints about McKinley's lack of social grace, of which Hearst made effective use. The captain of the "Maine," for instance, declared that diagrams printed in The Journal immediately after the explosion proved there had been a plot, and that The Journal must have known of it. It would have taken little to capitalize on such observations to create a popular revulsion against Hearst's leadership.

Hearst got his war at the age of thirty-five. Of all the grotesque antics of American millionaires, nothing equaled the spectacle of Hearst playing soldier, getting his yacht under the guns of the American fleet just before the bombardment, like a tipsy undergraduate running out on a football field before the kick-off, tumbling from one tropical misadventure to another without ever getting the idea that he was making a holy show of himself. There is an unforgettable picture of Hearst at war written by James Creelman, one of his reporters. Creelman was wounded at El Caney. "Someone knelt in the grass beside me. . . . Opening my eyes I saw Mr. Hearst . . . a straw hat with a bright ribbon on his head, a revolver at his belt and a pencil and a notebook in his hand. . . . Slowly he took down my story of the fight. . . . "I'm sorry you're hurt, but"—and his face was radiant with enthusiasm—"wasn't it a splendid fight? We must beat every paper in the world!"

Apparently that was the high moment of his career. As you check back over these exhaustive records of his life you find nothing to compare with it for simple coincidence of aspiration and accomplishment. In politics Hearst was defeated or headed off by everybody he fought—by Boss Murphy, by Al Smith, by Wilson and Charles Evans Hughes. Even Alton B. Parker licked him. With his whole newspaper organization functioning as a political machine to back him, he was defeated by William Gaynor for mayor of New York. When he organized the Independence League, his candidate for President, after a strenuous and nationwide campaign, got 80,000 votes. Eight years of "political adventuring" cost him about $2,000,000 and got him nothing except a Tammany rotten-borough seat in Congress, where he seldom spoke and, when he did, laid himself open to more effective attacks than he was able to deliver. When he printed his famous documents that charged the Mexican government with bribing liberal Senators, the forgeries were so obvious that defense of them was impossible. The one serious journalistic coup with which he can be credited—the theft of the Archbold papers, which incriminated the Standard Oil Company and a number of powerful political figures—was handled so badly that it did not aid his political designs, and was historically valuable in illuminating the whole process of capitalist corruption of democratic institutions, entangling Hearst himself in the corruption he exposed. He has so persistently misjudged the temper of the people and the strength of his opposition that his major campaigns, from his attacks on McKinley to his "annex Canada" drive, have all recoiled on him.

It is a statement of fact and not rhetoric when Charles Beard says that "Hearst, despite all the uproar he has made and all the power he wields, is a colossal failure" and one who, now that the end of his life is approaching, "will depart loved by few and respected by none whose respect is worthy of respect." Even in terms of the standards of his own class and generation, Hearst has been guilty of all-but-ruinous awkwardness and instability. The practices he has been guilty of are not altogether unique in the biographies of the great capitalists. But we know less about them than we know about Hearst because they have played their cards more carefully, been more disciplined and, above all, been less willing to sacrifice their own class interests for immediate personal gain or for the purpose of paying off old scores in individual rivalries.

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The wealth his father left him was a cushion that absorbed blunders which would have ruined his competitors. Yet even with this aid, in terms of Mr. Lundberg's analysis, the Yahoo empire of his publications is in serious difficulty. Lundberg says that recent publicity such as Mrs. Older's authorized biography, emphasizing Hearst's wealth, may be misleading and a sign of the uncertain state of his fortune rather than a sign of its strength. Eighteen of his papers are known as losers; The New York American has been known for years as the Vanishing American. In 1934 the profits of all his periodicals reached about $5,000,000. But the 1934 profits of only three—Good Housekeeping, The Los Angeles Examiner and The American Weekly—are estimated to be close to $6,000,000 by Mr. Lundberg, who calculates that Hearst could probably show a profit of more than $10,000,000 if he were to drop the papers on which he loses steadily. According to Mr. Lundberg, he has been stripping his publishing properties of liquid assets since 1930, while selling $50,000,000 of preferred stock in them to the public. The working capital of his mining interests has steadily increased while that of his publishing ventures has declined. The contract with the German government, reported by Frederick Birchall of The New York Times, under which Hitler pays Hearst $400,000 annually for news, may easily have been, not an act of political allegiance, but an economic lifesaver for Hearst.

There is one particularly powerful impression communicated by the new biographies of Hearst. The Hearst publications, with their frightful vulgarity and incoherence, have been used by two generations of American intellectuals as proof of what Edmund Wilson calls "the tendency of a democracy to lower cultural standards"—they have been taken as evidence that the masses of readers who purchase them want and are satisfied with the sort of decayed reading matter they contain. But you see as you study Hearst's life that in the deepest sense his papers have never been self-supporting, that they have always been subsidized out of the vast resources that lay behind them, that they have always been instruments by which their owner could impose his own philistinism on great masses of the people. When they collapsed, economically, they were propped up by the profits of gold and silver mines. When they were boycotted, as in Chicago, gangsters were hired to keep opposition papers off the stands and to see to it that dealers took an alloted number of copies. Hearst's blunders have been great and grotesque. They have made him one of the most universally detested men in our history. And they have sprung from his attributing to the masses all the narrowness of vision, all the impatience in achieving their ends, all the arid cunning and ruthless self-seeking that have made his own life so notorious and his own story so squalid.

ROBERT CANTWELL.

Spain Tries to Avoid Revolution

SPAIN obviously must do something about her poverty and backwardness. The peasants and city workers demand better conditions. The Right reactionaries, when in office, answered these demands with terror but nothing else, thus documenting a fact that is becoming clear to an increasing number of Spaniards: that the reactionaries have lost the right and never had the ability to rule the country.

The Right reactionaries are the large landed proprietors, the Church, the Monarchists and the few big industrials. They are depressed, frightened and disorganized. Their chief hope at the moment is a violent *coup d'état* with the aid of the army and the Guardia Civil. This scheme is a measure of their helplessness. The Left, therefore, has an unusual opportunity. On February 16, 1936, the radical united front won a decisive victory. The Socialists and Communists, refusing the responsibility of office, nevertheless gave their support to a minority Cabinet of Left bourgeois Republicans led by Prime Minister Don Manuel Azaña.

Azaña: Evolutionist, Not Revolutionist.—Azaña is an interesting person in an extraordinarily interesting situation. Spain needs a reorganization of her national economy so radical as to amount to revolution. Azaña hopes to make this revolution through evolution and by democratic means. The Socialists and Communists watch skeptically yet do not withdraw their support for two reasons: the fall of Azaña might bring back the Right; what he does, they believe, prepares the way for them. Azaña evidently thinks differently. He would resent being a Kerensky. He probably wants to create a new and special category for Spain which would correspond neither with fascism, bolshevism nor with the accepted forms of capitalism. "I want," he said to me, "a very Left republic with certain socialist innovations."

Don Manuel is not a Socialist, yet he talked to me about "socialist innovations," "collective agriculture" and "land confiscation without compensation." The fact is that many persons who elsewhere would normally be violent opponents of socialism realize its inevitability for Spain. A country must have a progressive class to lead and rule it. Throughout Western Europe the bourgeoisie has played that role with benefit to itself, the nation, and even, in varying degree, to the masses. But Spain never

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developed a bourgeoisie. This may be the cause of her downfall. It is too late to create a Spanish bourgeoisie now; the workers and peasants are clamoring for the power to lift themselves out of misery and make Spain a modern prosperous country.

Eighty percent of Spain's 23,000,000 inhabitants live in the villages. If the official class and urban intelligentsia are added, little remains for the industrial bourgeoisie. There is scarcely a middle class. The Church, under the monarchy, was an established institution which helped to keep the people in darkness and illiteracy. The people, however, are not really religious; they hate the Church because it is in fact the agent of their oppressors. So far this looks like a description of pre-1917 Russia, and it is this parallel which to many suggests a similar future development.

The Condition of the Spanish Peasants.—A few days ago, I went back, after two years' absence, to the village of Pueblo del Rio, thirty minutes' ride by electric train from the much publicized city of Seville. The peasants recognized me immediately. I went into their straw-thatched, mud-walled huts. It had been raining, and pools of water stood on the earthen floors. The people were in rags; they ate as little as ever; "nothing has changed for the better or worse," they reported. In 1934, nevertheless, they had refused money. This time they begged for it. They were all violently anti-Church. None of their children had been baptized. "The church is for fanatics and monarchists," one man tried to explain.

These peasants had nothing, absolutely nothing —a few broken chairs, not even a table to eat on (and why should they have one?), several crude platforms that served as beds. The men worked as day laborers on the estates of large proprietors at five pesetas a day, which is the legal minimum. They worked, on the average, three months a year. "Recently, under government pressure, there has been more work, but the landlords do not pay. They live in Seville and Madrid and have no money." These folk were resigned, and cowed by life. They did not even blame the estate owners. I have seen Bedouins in the East. These Spaniards lived no better. Many thousands in Spain live the same way. Whole settlements inhabit caves and eat roots and grasses.

These, of course, are the worst and lowest dregs of humanity. But the *yunteros,* the men who own a pair of mules and no land, or a hectare or two of land, hardly do better. I talked to scores of them. They are undernourished, all of them. Their women of thirty-five look fifty. I asked a mother of four why she had so many children. "They come," she replied, "but I would prefer to have none." In the province of Caceres, the largest in Spain, 61.6 percent of the population is illiterate. Other districts are its keen rivals. All these conditions warrant a death sentence upon the ruling classes.

A Land of Idle Rich and Idle Poor.—The Spanish peasantry is the victim of a semi-feudal landowning aristocracy. There are innumerable vestiges of feudalism and many remnants of feudal psychology in Spain. Agricultural technique is as obsolete as it was in Tsarist Russia, and the standard of productivity is low. Profits are rarely reinvested; the owners have no faith in themselves or their future. There is a vast amount of absenteeism. The curse of Spain is the idle rich and idle poor. I interviewed a landlord who, at the same time, is a high official of the estate owners' association of his region. It was significant that he kept turning his neck while he talked with me in the restaurant, and, indeed, our conversation for the first fifteen minutes was devoted to a discussion as to whether I would be discreet enough to prevent his being discovered and punished. His class is on the run. He said, "I solemnly affirm that agriculture cannot be improved except by irrigation." (In other words, nothing depended upon and nothing could be expected from the proprietors.) "Before the Socialists commenced their propaganda, the peasants lived happily, though they were not satisfied. The peasant was born on the land and is accustomed to hard work. He does not know much about the good things of life though he knows he is not paid enough. Wages are miserable, but it is impossible to pay more now. Agriculture has yielded no profit since 1931 (since the republic was established) because wages have been forced up and prices fell. We suffer from overproduction" (while Spaniards starve).

"With a real sense of humanity," he volunteered, "the problems of Spain could easily be solved." I asked him to be more concrete, but he offered only more phrases. The administrator of a large estate belonging to the Countess of Adanero, who owns 50,000 hectares of land, talked in the same vein.

The landowning class of Spain, responsible for the lives of 80 percent of the population, will not solve, because it cannot solve, the land problem, which is the chief Spanish problem. Since there is no peasant market there can be no industry of any account. Spain, which lacks everything, nevertheless counts 700,000 urban unemployed. The population has little money, little consumptive power, and the national economy, accordingly, is derelict.

Azaña's Land-Reform Program.—How does Azaña propose to meet this situation? He admits it is a grave situation which demands an immediate remedy. To date, he has done this: landowners have been forced to rent portions of their estates to *yunteros.* In the province of Caceres, one of the worst, Señor de la Fuente, the representative of the Institute of Agrarian Reform, published a proclamation on March 7 asking landlords to rent land to the *yunteros.* Not one had the sense to reply and conform. The peasants thereupon delivered an ultimatum: "If you will not give us land in forty-eight hours we will take it." On March

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12 the settlement of *yunteros* on the large estates commenced. Since then, 24,702 *yunteros* in Caceres have received 69,621 hectares. No land has been expropriated or confiscated. The *yunteros* are sharecroppers. It requires thirty to thirty-five hectares in these dry farming regions to keep a family. The *yunteros* have been given an average of three. A few had small pieces of land before, but very few, and in these cases the old strip may be far removed from the new. Some *yunteros* travel five hours on mule-back to their plots. In Badajoz, the second province where the Institute of Agrarian Reform has acted energetically, the peasants, on the night of March 25, simply occupied the estates, plowed up their parcels, and asked the Institute to legalize their acts—which it did. Here too the *yunteros* rent the land. Forty-five thousand Badajoz *yunteros* have been granted 120,000 hectares, an average of less than three hectares. Elsewhere, the land reform has made little if any progress. It will continue, however. Azaña told me that "when half a million peasants will have received land the problem will be solved." Azaña said too that he expected to confiscate some estates, presumably those of the grandees, without compensation, under a law that has been in abeyance for several years. He would also allow to revert to the collective possession of villages land which those villages used as collective pastures decades ago.

Whether the Spanish peasant will ultimately own his insufficient farm no one will say. "This is a delicate problem," Señor Ruiz-Funez, the Minister of Agriculture, said to me. Quite. But it has to be tackled some time and the later the worse. For the moment the *yunteros* remain, as stated, poor sharecroppers. Azaña said in my interview that the land reform would strengthen the urban bourgeoisie. He did not mind because that bourgeoisie was not anti-Republican. But will it benefit by the land reform? Perhaps the peasant will be slightly better off when the land reform is finished. That can only mean that he will be slightly better nourished. It does not mean that he will become an active consumer of city goods. Yet this is the crux of the issue. The land reform must be looked upon as a method of enriching the Spanish city and creating new industries. Azaña's measures are too narrow to achieve this.

The Danger of Azaña's Program.—A member of Azaña's Cabinet suggested to me that the land reform would weaken the Socialist Party. It may dampen its revolutionary ardor; the scores of *yunteros* whom I talked to on a two-thousand kilometer automobile trip showed clearly that they appreciated what was being done for them even when they felt how hopelessly inadequate it was. The Spanish peasantry has been so miserable that it is grateful for the most meager attention and assistance.

Azaña's land reform, accordingly, may save Azaña, but he is too big a man to be contented with only that. His reform cannot save Spain. The pity of it is that with its partial appeasement of rural unrest, the reform may emasculate the movement of protest, which holds a promise of elevating to power a class that could do for Spain what the bourgeoisie has accomplished in other countries—and then go on to greater heights. If the peasants are satisfied by the present land reform there will be less compulsion on Spanish politics to carry out the solution Spain needs.

Here an interesting point arises: Azaña's reform also weakens the landowning classes. They are deprived, unless there is a relapse into reaction, of effective control over their property. Suppose this continues. Suppose, then, that after two or three years the peasants are disillusioned with Azaña's moderate policy. Suppose they demand final expropriation of the estates and collectivization. Will the Spanish bourgeoisie have the force to resist? Perhaps Spain can effect an economic revolution democratically without a civil war. I do not know.

Meanwhile, the trend towards collectivization grows. I visited two collectives. There are others —all organized spontaneously by peasants who knew nothing about Soviet *kolhozi*. Señor de la Fuente and Señor Jorge Montojo, in charge of the land reform in Caceres and Badajoz respectively, were aware of the inadequacy of their operations. Both saw the wisdom of collectivization, especially in dry farming, which is widespread in Spain. Spanish decrees limit the use of machines in agriculture. Extensive dry farming with mechanical equipment would put a new face on the Spanish countryside. The estate owners are unwilling to do this. Individual peasants cannot. Collectives are the logical alternative. "But the Spanish peasant is an individualist," Ruiz-Funez argued. I heard this incredible proposition from many others. I do not believe that ugly destitution and individualism are compatible. The individualist who tolerated misery for decades will agree to let collectives give him plenty.

Can Azaña Remain in Power?—Largo Caballero, the extremely popular leader of the Left Socialists—most of the peasants are Left Socialists—told me he did not believe Azaña would collectivize. The Communists hold the same view. They are afraid, in fact, that the political situation is forcing followers of the conservative Lerroux and the reactionary Gil Robles to seek cover in Azaña's Left Republican Party, which, as a result, will move towards the Right. Will Azaña be hamstrung by his adherents? If he is, and if the masses then reject his policies, a crisis may occur that could conceivably give the reactionaries a chance to return. Or the masses may summon the Communists and Caballero, who told me he differed little from the Communists, to do what Azaña has failed to do. Unless the Right tries a coup, however, this cannot happen soon. "Soon" means twelve months at least.

Barcelona. LOUIS FISCHER.

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Mr. Wallace Tries Again

THE NEW soil-conservation and domestic-allotment act, or the S.C.A.D.A., was formulated in a rush after the Supreme Court's invalidation of the old A.A.A. Nevertheless, it is supposed to constitute a permanent, national agricultural program. We are entitled to judge it as such. We ought to be able to find in it some unified, clearly announced aim, based on a coherent social point of view.

As stated by Mr. Roosevelt, one of the ends of the S.C.A.D.A. is to raise farm income. This is to be done, as under the A.A.A., chiefly by rewarding farmers for cutting down their production of cash crops. A second objective is to maintain and increase soil fertility. No one has yet explained how these two aims are to be reconciled.

If it is true that the prosperity of the farmer requires a reduction of our allegedly excess farm acreage, obviously what he needs is fewer fertile acres, not more. If good-sized deserts could be created in the Middle West and South, with cactus, gila monsters and bleached buffalo skulls, the farmer—according to administration doctrine—would be sitting pretty. As long as we maintained a tariff on farm products, he could exact monopoly prices, and Mr. Wallace's goal of parity between agriculture and monopolistic industry would be in sight. By the crop-restriction half of the S.C.A.-D.A., Messrs. Roosevelt and Wallace are merely egging on the farmers to act like steel makers and oil-company heads, although on a far pettier scale. In violent contrast, in the soil-conservation half of their program, they are undertaking national planning of the highest sort—planning for the benefit of all of us. Messrs. Roosevelt and Wallace are trying to plow a furrow in two directions at once, which is a hard thing to do.

In the present crop year, the S.C.A.D.A. will distribute about $470,000,000 to farmers who "cooperate." Payments will be of two kinds. First, there will be a "soil-conserving" payment, averaging about $10 an acre. This will be made to farmers who refrain from planting a portion of their land in commercial crops, and agree to plant the same portion in soil-enriching crops, like alfalfa and soybeans. Second, there will be a "soil-maintenance" payment of about $1 an acre. This will go to farmers who have customarily planted a part of their land in soil-enriching crops, and agree to continue doing so.

Individual payments will fluctuate greatly. The size of "soil-conserving" payments will depend on the kind of crop that a farmer agrees not to grow and on the yield of his land. A tobacco planter with fertile land may receive as much as $60 an acre. Special amounts will also go to producers of cotton, peanuts, flaxseed, rice, sugar beets and sugar cane, and possibly to truck gardeners. On the other hand, a wheat farmer on poor land may get as little as $5. "Soil-maintenance" payments will vary chiefly according to the kind of crop used for soil enrichment. Over most of the Middle West, for example, it has been announced that the highest payments, $2 an acre, will go to farmers growing alfalfa and sericea. Farmers who treat their land with a specified amount of limestone fertilizer will receive $2.50 an acre, and $5 an acre will be given for planting land with tree seedlings, thus permanently removing it from production.

To see how the program works, let us take the imaginary case of a young corn-belt farmer named Cyrus, who has one hundred and sixty acres of average land. So that he will be eligible for a "soil-maintenance" payment, we will make Cyrus a scientific farmer, a graduate of a land-grant college, and a faithful rotator of his crops. He keeps one hundred and twenty acres in corn; forty acres are always left fallow, or sown in soil-enriching crops. Because of the S.C.A.D.A., he decides to restrict his acreage in corn to one hundred. On the twenty acres on which he does not plant corn, as well as on his remaining forty acres, he agrees to sow a soil-enriching crop of average cost. Next autumn he will be entitled to a "soil-conserving" payment of $10 for each of the twenty acres on which he has refrained from growing corn, or $200, together with a $40 "soil-maintenance" payment, making $240 in all. This money will be paid to him after his county committee has visited his farm, and certified that he has fulfilled his pledges.

To ward off a possible attack on its constitutionality, the S.C.A.D.A. also provides that, after January 1, 1937, the checks to farmers shall no longer be distributed directly by the federal government, but through the states. However, since the money will continue to come from the federal Treasury, and since the Secretary of Agriculture will continue to dictate the conditions for its use, probably the change will have more legal than real significance.

In brief form, these are the main provisions of the S.C.A.D.A. Ignoring for the moment their social desirability, let us see if they will bring about the restricted production that—according to administration doctrine—is needed to raise farm income. During its short lifetime, the old A.A.A. developed two severe lesions, the mortal nature of which was masked by the 1934 drought and the partial recovery of the farmer's market. The S.C.A.D.A. will probably succeed in healing one of them; the other seems beyond the powers of Drs. Roosevelt and Wallace.

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The first of the lesions was caused by the idle acres. In its original form, you will recall, the A.A.A. undertook to restrict only specified major crops. Farmers were required to cut down their acreage in these major crops, but nothing was said about the land thus left idle, nor about the rest of their farms. Many enterprising producers, after restricting their major crop, promptly planted a subsidiary one. In the Southeast, farmers who had curtailed their acreage in cotton or tobacco, began planting peanuts. In the Middle West, the wheat and corn-and-hog farmers began feeding beef cattle or planting potatoes. At once, a terrified yowl arose from farmers whose whole livelihood depended on peanuts, beef or potatoes. The peanut growers had peanuts raised to the status of a major crop; and the cattle ranchers obtained the Jones-Connally bill and the potato farmers the potato-control bill.

It became evident that, in the foreseeable future, all farmers would demand that their special crop be brought under the A.A.A. It would have made national planning for agriculture inevitable, and from such a possibility, Messrs. Roosevelt and Wallace shrank in seeming panic. The S.C.A.D.A. is obviously designed to end this problem of the idle acres once and for all. Under its provisions, a farmer who restricts his major crop must leave his idle acres idle, or get no money. He can plant a carefully tabulated list of grasses and legumes to enrich his soil, but nothing that might conceivably alarm his fellows.

The other lesion afflicting the A.A.A. was caused by intensive farming on the part of low-cost producers. The A.A.A.'s avowed purpose was to raise prices to a point where the average-cost man could make a profit. Moreover, pressure was unremitting to lift prices to a level where the high-cost man, as well, could survive. This was clearly apparent in the fight of the South for 12-cent cotton. According to experts, a 12-cent price is necessary to meet the bare costs of many producers in the Southeast. However, the same experts say that on the new, relatively unexhausted land of Texas and Arkansas, planters make their costs with 4 or 5-cent cotton. With the price at 12 cents, these low-cost men obviously have a strong incentive to improve their farming techniques, use more fertilizer and labor, and increase their yields.

As prices rose under the A.A.A., there was a clearly marked tendency for low-cost producers of all crops to increase their yields. Before the A.A.A. had been in operation a year, the cotton planters demanded and obtained the Bankhead act, which, instead of merely limiting acreage, limited production. Each cotton planter received a quota of so-and-so many bales of cotton—regardless of whether his land was poor or fertile—and all cotton ginned above the quota was subjected to a penalty tax. Soon afterwards, the tobacco, rice and potato producers obtained similar laws. Messrs. Roosevelt and Wallace were faced with the alternative of establishing a system of vested rights—a multitude of tiny franchises—for agricultural production, or else of moving ahead to real agricultural planning. Again they hesitated.

The Supreme Court has now swept away all laws for compulsory restriction. The problem of the low-cost producer, however, still remains. It is hard to predict how soon it will again become acute. There will need to be, first, a year or two of favorable growing weather, and second, a period of high prices. But as soon as these two conditions are fulfilled, the low-cost farmers—while simultaneously collecting their S.C.A.D.A. payments—will almost certainly increase their yields. Surpluses will then pile up, and, unless the government takes fresh action, the restriction half of the S.C.A.D.A. will disintegrate. Anticipating the S.C.A.D.A.'s eventual breakdown, the tobacco planters have already started to agitate for an interstate compact reëstablishing control over tobacco production, and have won the assent of the Virginia Legislature.

A number of authorities who deplore the restriction half of the S.C.A.D.A. feel that it deserves support because of its provisions for soil conservation. There is no doubt about the urgent national need to check erosion, no doubt that we are destroying soil fertility at a rate that will half-ruin the country in another hundred years. But, despite the great importance of soil conservation, it seems to me that the methods chosen by the S.C.A.D.A. are inexcusably inefficient and expensive.

Like the A.A.A., the S.C.A.D.A. does not discriminate between farmers already using scientific technique and those who aren't. During the present year, for example, all farmers growing corn are asked to cut their acreage by 15 percent. Among the Middle West corn farmers, there are some with vast knowledge of scientific agriculture, men who—among other conservation practices—have rotated their crops for years. In their case, it is ridiculous to say that the S.C.A.D.A. promotes soil conservation. Equally, in the Middle West there are some of the worst farmers in the world. For them, a cut of 15 percent is wholly inadequate.

Under the A.A.A., the failure to distinguish among the varying circumstances of farmers was a steady source of protests. Their justice was freely admitted by Mr. Wallace. About a year ago he undertook to set up his so-called plan for regional adjustment. This was a proposal for the scientific apportionment of production, first, among agricultural regions; next among subdivisions within each region; and last, among the counties and individual farms within each subdivision. Here was national planning on a grand scale, and had Mr. Wallace persisted in it, the immense, cumbersome apparatus of the S.C.A.D.A. would have been unneeded. The regional-adjustment plan was warmly welcomed by agricultural scientists, officials of land-grant colleges and the best farmers, but it apparently failed to

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catch the imagination of most of the rank and file.

With the S.C.A.D.A., Mr. Wallace made a new effort to solve the problem. To quote from the S.C.A.D.A.'s order to county committees: "Adjustments . . . will be made . . . where a farmer's soil-depleting or soil-conserving acreage is materially out of line with that of similar farms in the same locality." But since, in most cases, the members of a county committee will themselves suffer if exceptional adjustments are allowed, this solution seems unpromising.

The soil-conservation half of the S.C.A.D.A. is open to another, and far more serious, attack. Shortly after Mr. Roosevelt took office, a federal Soil Conservation Service was created, devoted solely to that end. It has had an astounding success. With the coöperation of 12,000 farmers, it has set up 141 experimental areas, totaling 6,700,000 acres, and on this land it has permanently ended erosion. At Dalhart, Texas, near the center of the dust-storm area, Mr. H. H. Finnell—one of the geniuses of the Department of Agriculture—has checked blowing on 19,100 acres out of an experimental area of 19,700 acres. Since 1933, the Soil Conservation Service has received $47,000,000, some of which is still unspent. Its officials say that the top cost for controlling erosion over most of the country would be about $5 an acre. A large part of the job consists of instructing farmers in improved techniques, and under the stimulus of the Soil Conservation Service, many farmers have begun to rotate their crops. They are doing voluntarily—without the hope of any reward other than the improvement of their land—all that the S.C.A.D.A. would bribe them to do at the rate of $10 an acre, and they are doing a great deal more besides.

Experts say that if Messrs. Roosevelt and Wallace had been ready to turn over to the Soil Conservation Service the $470,000,000 to be distributed through the S.C.A.D.A. in 1936, and had been ready to repeat this appropriation for two more years, the threat of erosion in this country would be definitely ended. In contrast, the methods of the S.C.A.D.A. by themselves will never stop erosion.

Perhaps the only way both permanently to improve the farmer's status and to assure all of us more and cheaper food and clothing is through the application of scientific techniques to agriculture. This is probable whether farmers are to be brought under a large measure of social control or left free to compete among themselves. There are many problems involved—an important one is the present grip of middlemen on the farmers' markets—that cannot be discussed here. The S.C.A.D.A., however, seems likely to serve as an instrument for saving the inefficient producer, and for keeping food and clothes high-priced. Because it is so largely concerned with restricting production, it is a poor device for soil conservation. Mr. Wallace and the men around him are the most brilliant group in the administration; we are entitled to something better from them.

JONATHAN MITCHELL.

Washington Notes

Oil on Troubled Eastern Bosses—Landon's Slick Campaign—Borah Remembers —F. D. R. Gets Labor's Vote

THERE is increasing evidence that men interested in Governor Landon's candidacy either have negotiated or else are on the point of negotiating an understanding with the Eastern Republican bosses, and that he will be the nominee. It is generally admitted that Senator Borah, Colonel Knox and Senator Dickinson, the dog-food man, are no longer serious contenders. The two dark horses, Senators Vandenberg and Steiwer, remain possibilities, but no more than that.

Should Mr. Landon be nominated, there will be a great effort to make it appear that he was the choice not of the bosses, but of the party rank and file. Yet, with the convention now only three weeks away, what do the rank and file know about him, or the kind of President he would make? Last fall, outside of Kansas and its bordering states, hardly anyone had heard of Mr. Landon. Since then, he has made two speeches, in which he has managed to say exactly nothing. A few days ago, in a radio interview, he came out against class hatred and in favor of Washington's Farewell Address. About all that Republican voters know of him is that he has three extraordinarily enchanting children, likes to wear mud-spattered high boots and is in favor of balancing the budget whenever practicable—which is the same position assumed by Mr. Roosevelt. To say that Mr. Landon is the choice of the Republican rank and file is true only in the sense that a number taken from a dream-book is the choice of a person playing the policy game.

To many people, the thought that Presidents are made by secret deals among bosses and business men is extremely offensive. Because these deals are seldom divulged, they take comfort in believing they do not exist. Yet, for proof, it is necessary to go no farther back than 1932. In that year Mr. Roosevelt was far more clearly the choice of the Democratic voters than Mr. Landon now is of the Republicans. Nevertheless, at Chicago Mr. Roosevelt had to bargain either with the Eastern bosses allied to Mr. Al Smith, or with the Western and Southern groups under Messrs. Garner, McAdoo and Hearst. He chose the latter, and no outsider yet knows the precise terms of the deal. However, at the beginning of his administration there were more appointees from Texas, proportionately, in key positions than from any other state, and many of them were thoroughly unsympathetic with Mr. Roosevelt's aims. One comparatively minor case may be cited, that of the patent-medicine-advertising bill, which was opposed first, and most strongly, by the Texas group. Mr. Roosevelt made several earnest attempts to have it passed, and found that he could not without splitting his administration wide open.

Although Mr. Landon's present commanding position in the Republican race is due primarily to the influence of business groups, he himself must have credit for perhaps the slickest campaign in recent political history. As last week's primary showed, he stumbled badly in accepting Mr. Hearst's support in California. Except for that, his record

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is unsurpassable. He goes to Cleveland without a single open enemy among his rivals. Knox, Dickinson, Vandenberg, Steiwer—there is not one of them to whom he could not decently offer a Cabinet post, and who could not decently accept. Even with Borah—at least up to the moment this is written—there has been no irrevocable break. Still more miraculous, except for Governor Hoffman in New Jersey and Mr. Hoover in California, he has successfully avoided offending the important party leaders. There is not one state boss who needs to fear that he would be discriminated against in the distribution of federal patronage were Mr. Landon President. You have only to remember back to 1928, when the Hoover supporters and the Hilles-Roraback-Mellon bloc were at one another's throats, or to 1920, when the followers of Wood and Lowden were similarly embittered, to understand Mr. Landon's technical achievement.

To all appearances, Senator Borah's attitude toward Mr. Landon is undergoing a change. Six weeks ago—when he was denouncing Landon as the candidate of the Standard Oil—Mr. Borah's opinion of Landon was extremely low. Since then, Landon emissaries have worked diligently to soften Mr. Borah's contempt. Without difficulty, they proved that Landon has fought the Standard Oil during most of his adult life. Tacitly they admitted that Mr. Borah could ruin Landon's chances by continued open attacks on him. They urged that the most probable consequence of Landon's defeat, however, would be the nomination of Mr. Steiwer, the hand-picked candidate of Hilles and Roraback, or of Mr. Dickinson, the darling of Mr. Hoover. This possibility is reported to have impressed Mr. Borah deeply.

The most important mediator between Mr. Borah and Mr. Landon has been Mr. William Allen White, a classmate of Borah at the University of Kansas. In his recent biography of Borah, Mr. Claudius O. Johnson retells the story of Borah's indictment in 1907 for timber frauds on federal lands, and Mr. White's part in rescuing him. The indictment was the work of the regular Republican organization of Idaho, which Borah had just defeated in his first campaign for the Senate. The local federal attorney in charge of the case was Borah's bitter political enemy. At Borah's request, Mr. White made a hurried, secret trip to Oyster Bay, where he appealed to Theodore Roosevelt for a special prosecutor from Washington to try Borah's case. Roosevelt agreed, and Borah was at once triumphantly acquitted. Last month, Mr. White tried to mitigate Mr. Borah's hostility toward Mr. Landon, and, according to report, partially succeeded.

As a result of last week's meeting of the A.F. of L.'s executive committee, it seems likely that the A.F. of L., as an organization, will endorse Mr. Roosevelt's candidacy as soon as the conventions have been held. The only other occasion on which the A.F. of L. has formally supported a presidential nominee was in 1924, when it supported the elder La Follette. It was evident last week, however, that the craft-union leaders are wholly unsympathetic to the recently organized Labor's Non-Partisan Committee for Roosevelt in 1936, in which Mr. John L. Lewis is a dominant figure, and that they resent the favor that Mr. Roosevelt has shown it. Nevertheless, even from the narrowest political point of view, Mr. Roosevelt probably has acted wisely in allying himself with Mr. Lewis and the industrial-union group. He will receive the votes of most A.F. of L. members in any case. What he needs are the votes of the unorganized workers in the mass industries—the steel, rubber, radio and auto workers. They have far more faith in Mr. Lewis and his associates than in the A.F. of L., and will follow Mr. Lewis' personal leadership more readily than that of any other man.

T. R. B.

Washington.

Other People's Money

The Old Gentleman Shows His Medals—A Comedy of Surprises—The Technique of "Contacts"

WELL, Mr. Morgan has gotten another medal. The bauble was handed to him by Mr. Owen D. Young. The General Electric chairman allowed that it was given "in recognition of distinguished services rendered to humanity, as one exemplifying and promoting high standards of business ethics and upholding the honor and credit of our country." No one could have been more surprised at this presentation than Mr. Morgan and myself. My own reactions were indeed well expressed by Mr. Morgan as he took the trinket. "I have been wondering not a little," he said, "just why you have given me this great honor."

That was a characteristic observation. Mr. Morgan had a way, at the Senate munitions hearings, in answer to questions, of blurting out the most indiscreetly truthful answers. It took all the ceaseless watchfulness of Mr. Lamont and Mr. Whitney, seated beside him, to guard him from these lapses. And so the naïve old gentleman, who must have been wondering what he had done for humanity and what he had done to promote business ethics, told Mr. Young so quite frankly.

But the presentation, which was to say the least diverting, was also interesting. It offered a startling instance of a technique that is so often impressed upon the minds of youths setting out for college. It is to the effect that, while college may perhaps mix a boy up a little through its methods of education, it has the compensating advantage of giving him the priceless benefits of "contacts." Contacts! It is for this that college, golf course, the luncheon club have been developed. And here, in the case of Mr. Morgan, one may see how useful contacts can be made to yield good dividends when needed.

This presentation was made by the National Institute of Social Science. Of course in such a body the job of selecting the victims of the yearly award must be entrusted to a committee. In this case there was a committee on medals. It is entirely probable that no one will ever know just how and from what quarter the idea of presenting the medal to Mr. Morgan entered the heads of the committee. There is the little bird that goes about whispering such things into people's ears. There is the idea—seemingly vagrant—which, roaming about, curls up in the consciousness of the right party, who never suspects and perhaps never

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finds out that the idea was sent on its way from some person who knew precisely what he was doing—that it wasn't a vagrant idea at all.

There may, of course, be nothing to this at all. But if, by any chance, the notion occurred to anyone—say a Morgan partner—or a Morgan crony—or a Morgan public-relations man—that, following the munitions hearings, it would be an excellent thing to give Mr. Morgan a medal, certainly the suggestion would not be difficult to handle in the National Institute of Social Science.

The pilot of such an idea—assuming merely for speculative purposes that there was a pilot—would look about the National Institute and the medal committee. Well, there is Mrs. August Belmont. Then there is Mr. Charles B. Davenport, of the Carnegie Foundation, where there is a Morgan partner or two on the boards. And—bless my soul!—sure enough, there is a Morgan partner on the very medal committee itself—Mr. Herbert B. Satterlee. And—goody, goody!—there is Mrs. Henry P. Davison, widow of the late Henry P. Davison, another Morgan partner. Well, this ought not to be a hard assignment surely. And here is Mr. Emory R. Johnson, of the Wharton School of Business Administration of the University of Pennsylvania, of which, by a happy chance, Dr. Thomas S. Gates is president. Dr. Gates is none other than a former Morgan partner. There are a few others on the committee on medals. One is a prominent business man who is and was a director of the National City Bank. Surely he would know Business Ethics if he met them in the street.

Now, of course, I do not suggest that anyone put any pressure on these persons. It was necessary merely to toss the name of Mr. Morgan among them and just wait for the medal to be delivered.

This of course is not the first honor conferred on Mr. Morgan. The last one, I think, was the First Order of the Sacred Treasure of Japan. And I can recall when New York University conferred the degree of Doctor of Commerce. Of course, the good chancellor could not expect a person like Mr. Morgan, who had degrees from Oxford and Cambridge, to call for the degree, so the chancellor and his faculty went down to 231 Madison Avenue, undressed in quarters provided for them, put on their robes and caps, and delivered the diploma at the tradesmen's entrance. But the medals and honors have not been coming along very fast lately. In fact, Mr. Morgan hasn't been promoting business ethics or saving the honor and credit of his country to any great extent of late. He has been shooting grouse, getting investigated and generally exploring the possibilities of polite leisure for some years. Hence it was natural that you and I and Mr. Morgan should wonder what could have gotten into the medals committee.

But it's all plain enough. Perhaps the great financier is about to retire, to take himself off, for the most part, to No. 12 Grosvenor Square and to his country seat in Wall Hall, Waterford, England. And this, it may be, was a sort of *Vale! Vale!*, a kind of "recommend," a sort of salute indicating that the National Institute of Social Science, at least, looked upon him as great and good and upon his traducers as a lot of wolves.

At all events, the little comedy made a bright spot in the day's news, otherwise dark and gloomy enough.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

On the Labor Front

Textile Workers Behind the Eight-Ball—Industrial Unionism Makes Some Gains—Labor News Items

OUT OF Paterson, New Jersey, comes a strange story. It concerns a proposed union agreement that would force the organized silk workers to accept the same wage rates as those paid in the open shops of the Paterson district. Indeed, the contract would bar the union from striking—or even asking—for higher pay than the open-shop rate. These terms are so unusual that I think it is safe to say they are unique in union literature, and I should be inclined to regard the whole affair as an unpleasant hoax were it not for the fact that the contract is reported to have the endorsement of President Thomas F. McMahon and other national officers of the United Textile Workers of America. In fact there is evidence to show that the U.T.W. officials are threatening to revoke the charter of Local 1716 of the silk workers' federation, largely because the local rejected the agreement when it was submitted to a vote of the membership.

The story becomes even more incredible when one realizes that the U.T.W. officials apparently intend to use the terms of this proposed agreement on a national scale. For even with the most liberal interpretation, the contract gives the workers little except the right to pay dues. It places the determination of wages solely in the hands of an arbitration board, which, even if it were wholly sympathetic to labor, could raise union wages only if it were shown that *open-shop* rates were already higher. The procedure, as provided in Section 10 of the agreement, is as follows: The silk manufacturers may petition for a wage reduction whenever they can submit data showing that a "substantial portion of the workers doing similar work in mills in the area . . . are being paid lower piece and time rates than those being paid by the manufacturers who are parties to this agreement." On the other hand, the union can petition for an increase in wages only if it can show that a "substantial portion" of workers in non-union mills are receiving higher pay for the same work.

In brief, the open shop sets the pace. It should be noted that the union agrees not merely to accept the decisions of the arbitration board, but also to refrain from striking, picketing or engaging in any activity tending to excite sympathy. If it violates these promises or any terms of the agreement, the board is empowered to award damages against it. Of course, the purpose of the agreement—to eliminate the element of labor from competition—is laudable enough. The only serious objection arises when it is proposed to do this on the basis of open-shop standards. The question then naturally arises, Why have a union?

Among the unions that have made real gains in recent years, perhaps the most outstanding is the Federation of Flat Glass Workers, which recently joined forces with the eight other A.F. of L. unions that make up the Committee for Industrial Organization. Its actual record of organization, since it started in 1933, is a better argument for industrial unionism than could be presented in any number of learned treatises. For in this brief period it has obtained

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signed contracts and union recognition covering about 95 percent of the flat-glass industry. There are some 14,000 paid-up members in 26 locals throughout the country. The union has established the six-hour day, with a minimum wage of 50 cents an hour in small plants and 55 cents in the large plate-glass factories. In 1933, according to President Glen W. McCabe, some of these same companies were paying wages as low as 15 cents an hour, while the prevailing rate in some of the larger companies was not more than 35 cents an hour.

Meantime, the developments at South Bend, Indiana, where the United Automobile Workers of America have just concluded their convention, were most encouraging. The union is now autonomous, after a probationary period of one year, and its newly elected officers are progressives with an industrial-union point of view. Their plans call for an aggressive organizational drive, in which John L. Lewis and his committee have offered to coöperate. It is entirely probable that the new leadership will make it possible for the independent unions to unite with the U.A.W. in this drive—a unity that could not be achieved while the auto workers were under the domination of the craft-minded officials appointed by President Green.

Labor Briefs.—In an important decision, the National Labor Relations Board has refused to intervene in jurisdictional disputes between the craft and industrial unions. The Board rejected the petition of the International Association of Machinists that it be recognized as the collective-bargaining representative of sixteen machine fixers in the Axton-Fisher Tobacco Company. The machine fixers are at present in the Tobacco Workers' International Union, which has a contract covering some 650 workers in the Axton-Fisher plant. . . . The American sense of justice and fair play is shocked, according to President William Green, by the exile from Mexico of former President Calles and of Luis N. Morones, head of the Mexican Federation of Labor. Mr. Green expressed these sentiments after a conference with Mr. Morones, but before consulting the wishes of the Mexican workers, who demonstrated 85,000 strong in Mexico City in support of the government's action. Both Morones and Calles became so wealthy while supposedly serving labor and the revolution that the Mexican workers are neither shocked nor aggrieved. . . . The strike of the American Newspaper Guild on Hearst's Wisconsin News, though involving only a score of editorial employees, has become one of the major labor disputes in the country. Now in its third month, it has enlisted the support of the whole national and local labor movement. A nationwide citizens' committee has been formed to fight the entire chain of Hearst newspapers. . . . A 10 to 20-percent increase in the number of musicians employed by radio stations is expected from a new agreement recently signed by the musicians' union in New York City with the three major broadcasting chains. The agreement shortens hours and raises pay in establishing a thirty-hour, six-day week at a minimum salary of $140. Overtime work on the seventh day calls for extra pay of $30. To the unorganized professionals in other fields, where hours of work are unlimited and minimum pay scales non-existent, these terms may suggest that a good trade union has its points.

WILLIAM P. MANGOLD.

The Bandwagon

Cardinal Hayes said that while he was appalled to read statistics showing more than 10,000,000 persons out of work, he recognized that Christ had said the poor would be with us always.—*News item in The New York World-Telegram.*

The Washington Daily News in a copyrighted story quotes Mrs. Harper Donelson Sheppard, Pennsylvania D.A.R. State Regent, as saying she had circulated Pennsylvania chapters with the "Matilda Wutski" story about Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins [the totally false report that she was a Jewish immigrant from Russia].

"I didn't say the report was true," Mrs. Sheppard said. "I merely quoted it as something being circulated. I haven't yet seen any proof that it isn't true. I don't like Secretary Perkins. She hasn't done what she ought to do. She hasn't deported those aliens."—*Washington dispatch to The New York World-Telegram.*

The Republican National Committee should annul its plan, or proposed plan, of organizing its own advisory group of college professors. . . . The administration of Mr. Harding was a successful administration. He was not a college man and he never consulted with college savants.—*Editorial in The Pottsville, Pa., Journal.*

Charles M. Schwab, ensconced in a two-bed stateroom on A deck, a valet hovering around, had just one message for the world today before he sailed to Europe:

"Don't strive for riches. That's my advice to young men. I've worked hard all my life. I've accomplished much—but it means nothing."—*New York dispatch in The Boston Post.*

Oil executives . . . asserted that "free and untrammeled competition" prevailed in the marketing of oil products. . . .

The fact that all the major companies quote the same price in every locality where they compete is probably responsible for the belief that there is an agreement on prices, one executive said.—*News item in The New York Times.*

THOSE BOLD BAD VIGILANTES

Damages of $2,500 are being asked of Jack Green and Sol Nitzberg, the two labor organizers who six months ago were beaten and tarred and feathered in Santa Rosa [California], by Fred Cairns, alleged leader of the vigilante mob, and Harold G. Campbell, also reported as one of the "law and order" gang.

The complaint charges that on August 21, the night of the tarring and feathering, Green and Nitzberg threatened Cairns and Campbell, shot at them, and "did pull, jerk, jostle and strike plaintiffs," who "sustained severe shock and injuries to their nervous systems." Business losses as a result of the events of the evening were also reported in the complaint.—*Press release of the American Civil Liberties Union.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column and $1 will be paid for each item used. Address the Bandwagon, care of The New Republic.—THE EDITORS.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Norman Thomas' Newest Line

SIR: With deep interest I read Norman Thomas' review of my book in your issue of May 6. Thanks for your invitation of a few words of comment.

True, Communists in 1936 are not reprinting their words of 1932 as the answer to the problems of today. The only group doing so to my knowledge is the Socialist Labor Party. Even Norman Thomas talks much differently, and that is one of the reasons why our discussions have "a far less belligerently controversial tone" than before. I must also say, echoing Comrade Thomas, that I find his new line "pleasanter and on the whole more promising in the struggle against fascism in America than the old." That is why it is possible to talk realistically about a united front; that is why the realization of the united front is closer than Comrade Thomas realizes, in spite of his hesitations and doubts.

Comrade Thomas likes the present line of the Communists, but raises the question whether we may not suddenly change it. Perhaps he could answer that more decisively, if he would judge on the same basis we would use in answering the same question with regard to himself and his group. We do not expect such a sudden change on his side, despite our opinion that they are unclear and vacillating; that is because we think their course is determined by great social forces and movements among the masses, not by the vagaries of their own minds. We think it would be difficult, if not impossible, for them to go back to their previous position without committing political suicide. We are living in a new day, and even the Socialist Party must change fundamentally, no matter how painful it is, or be left hopelessly behind. And if Comrade Thomas wants to influence our course, let him take us at our word when we invite the united front; that would make it all the more difficult for us to do anything but go forward, even if he were correct.

Comrade Thomas doubts the possibility of a united front of frankly irreligious with religious organizations. He says, "a united front with the religious on these terms is a great trick if you can work it." The answer is, it does work. The Communists have more united-front relations with religious organizations than have the Socialists.

Comrade Thomas has unfortunately even further confused his understanding of fascism in America. He agrees that Long was a "forerunner of fascism" (not liking my term of "semi-fascist"), but denies that the Liberty League (and apparently also Hearst and the dominant Republican leaders) are driving in the same direction. He says they want, "not fascism" but "a return to the age of Coolidge." But Hitler's slogans for a "return" to an even earlier period didn't prevent his movement from being fascism; a return to Coolidge means, in the conditions of 1936, precisely to drive towards fascism in America. Comrade Thomas is doing an ill service when he helps the Republican Party and Liberty League to cover up their essentially fascist direction. Even Mr. Ickes, in his denunciation of these "fascist-minded men," is closer to the truth.

It is painful to see Comrade Thomas repeating the old mistakes of the Communists, with variations on the idea of incompatibility between immediate demands and Socialist aims. We outgrew this childhood sickness many years ago. Fighting for old-age pensions, and for this purpose approaching the Townsend movement with sympathy and not antagonism, is not reformism; Comrade Thomas' approach is, in contrast, sectarianism of a kind that makes him, despite himself, an aid to the present shameful attack against the Townsendites by the reactionaries. Nor is the fight for higher relief standards, for government operation of closed factories, etc., to "make love to everybody who wants a subsidy." That phrase sounds too much in harmony with the Liberty League to come with good grace from Comrade Thomas. These demands are not merely "the price" we must pay for a Farmer-Labor Party, but they will be in the Farmer-Labor Party program because they represent the immediate needs of the masses. Comrade Thomas should accept them less grudgingly, and he would thereby hasten, not delay, the progress of socialism among the masses.

I haven't space to deal with many other important points, especially that of war, on which our views were completely misrepresented. In conclusion, let me say that Comrade Thomas' review of my book seems, on the whole, to represent a more friendly approach to the united front. That is welcome.

New York City. EARL BROWDER.

From The New Republic Mail Bag

Louis S. Posner, member of the Mortgage Commission of the state of New York, comments on John T. Flynn's article in The New Republic of May 6. Mr. Flynn discussed Judge Rosenman's decision against the bondholders who sued the Chase National Bank as trustee because the bank did not prevent the substitution for an original block of securities another block which eventually proved worthless. Commissioner Posner emphasizes the point, also made by Mr. Flynn, that Judge Rosenman gave the only decision permissible under long established legal precedents in such cases. The Commissioner says that the duties of trustee in such cases are far more those of a depository than those of guardian, despite the implications most people ordinarily see in the word "trustee." Commissioner Posner thinks that Judge Rosenman's enlightened decision, which points out that the justice of the case is at direct variance with its legalistic phases, is an excellent means of aiding progress by calling attention to injustices that can be remedied by legislative enactment.

Norman H. Tallentire of the United Committee to Aid Vermont Marble Workers asks us to record a vigorous denial of the rumor that the Vermont marble strike has been ended because the strikers went back to work. The facts in the case are that 670 men went out six months ago and 640 are still on strike after fighting through a bitter Vermont winter on the average of $1.86 per family per week. Rumors are being circulated in an unsuccessful attempt to undermine the morale of the strikers. They are continuing the fight, however, and would welcome greatly needed contributions sent to the new headquarters of the United Committee to Aid Vermont Marble Workers, 7 West Fourteenth Street, New York City.

Clara Leiser, 7 Park Avenue, New York City, is preparing an authorized biography of Professor William Ellery Leonard of the University of Wisconsin and asks that former students, relatives and friends who have letters, personal reminiscences or other relevant material communicate with her.

What's on the Air?

Senator Arthur Capper of Kansas and Senator Hugo Black of Alabama discuss "The New Deal Balance Sheet" on the People's Lobby program. Saturday, May 16, 2 to 2:30 P. M., C.B.S.

Secretary of the Interior Ickes sets forth the present status of conservation of our national resources. Saturday, May 16, 10:30 to 11 P. M., N.B.C.-WJZ.

Representative Henry Ellenbogen of Pennsylvania will speak on the Wagner-Ellenbogen bill for housing and slum clearance. Tuesday, May 19, 9:30 to 9:45 P. M., N.B.C.-WJZ.

Willard Thorpe, director of Economics of Dun and Bradstreet, speaks on a program in observance of Foreign Trade Week. Tuesday, May 19, 4 to 4:15 P. M., C.B.S.

Secretary of State Hull is guest speaker at Foreign Trade Luncheon. Friday, May 22, 1:15 to 2:15 P. M., N.B.C.-WEAF.

Keynote speech by Leo Krzycki at opening of the national convention of the Socialist Party at Cleveland. Saturday, May 23, 11 to 12 A.M., N.B.C.-WEAF.

Nomination of presidential and vice-presidential candidates of the Socialist Party direct from the convention hall. Monday, May 25, 10:30 to 11 A.M., N.B.C.-WJZ.

First public address by Socialist candidates. Monday, May 25, 10:30 to 11 P. M., N.B.C.-WJZ.

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The Lorenz Book

My Life and Work, by Dr. Adolf Lorenz. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 371 pages. $3.50.

YOU MIGHT think in the case of a great doctor that the book would be largely technical, or at least a record of the field of medicine and the miraculous repute of his operations all over the world. The chief one of these operations was the so-called open reduction of congenital hip dislocation. "It is, of course," the autobiography says, "an upward displacement which evidences itself in a shortening of the leg. The child often refuses to stand, and learns to walk later than normal children, with a peculiar, swaying, yielding limp. The deformity of the hip causes subsequent deformities of the spine. In bilateral hip luxation the deformity becomes very conspicuous later on. The abdomen protrudes, as do the buttocks. Hip and knee joints are slightly flexed. The whole posture seems to imitate a zigzag line. Worst of all is the inability to walk any distance. In later years, when the body-weight increases, walking becomes painful and even impossible. . . . It is the most frequent of all congenital deformities. Many surgeons, the best of them, had tried their skill, from old Hippocrates to the present time, and all of them had declared congenital hip dislocation not only absolutely incurable but not even capable of improvement."

It is only a very minor portion of the book that is taken up with even so simple a statement as that. You get a clear account of the young doctor's passage from surgery, where his hands could not stand the perpetual carbolic acid then in use, into the dry surgery of orthopedic treatment, then in its undeveloped state; and you have explanations of the conditions, the prevalence of the congenital dislocation, the ratio between the sexes—eight girls to one boy—the progress of the Lorenz methods, and the way in which he became the means of confidence and hope to thousands everywhere who had been judged incurable. But the book is not about all this so much as it is about what went into the making, all those qualities and details in life and in temperament that are brought into the sum of such a man and his work, and that represent the source and the cost of what grows complete in him.

It would be easy to miss some of the essence of Dr. Lorenz's book. Just as we might take for granted the fact that here is a Viennese surgeon able to write his memoirs in English, we might miss the fact, or the imposing import, that here is a man who but for one vote would have had the Nobel Prize, that he is such as in classic times would have been one of the sages, and in medieval times one of the fathers or saints, or even servants of the devil. I put that last in to make Dr. Lorenz smile, for one of the prime qualities of his book about himself is its humor. There is no comicality or funny intention, but rather a whole bath of humorous sweetness and proportion by which even the tremendous sensation and notoriety that attended his first visit to America is kept in place, understood for what it was worth as a guarantee of greatness and also for what it was worth as a promise of contributions to his charities for the Viennese children. In the same way his life, both the elements and events in it which have made him most happy and those which have hurt him worst, bringing him to despair and several times to the point of death, are seen for us in the fineness of a certain deep irony. And yet we perceive well enough what pity and ardor have been behind all that surmounting of obstacles, that array of countless operations paid for at times but oftener free. And the story of the many coming to him from all continents, as once they came from the hills and strange towns to some healer's feet, contrives to touch our imaginations with the shining and fabulous.

In the details of Dr. Lorenz's account—the incidents, the people, recollections of childhood and later days, with which this book abounds—what counts is the character of the memory at work. A forest of details covers the experiences that have made up such a life, so many persons, places, happenings, triumphs, risks, honors, et cetera, plus the sheer unwinding of the years since he was born in 1854. The things Dr. Lorenz chooses to remember for this book provide a medium by which he is best painted. The boy visiting the goat's stall, watching how daintily and delicately the animal would pick up the single leaves in the fodder thrown before her; the light on the fields; the color of a door; the epileptic beggar falling backward into the cellar; Father Gregory, the boy's uncle, taking him in to the prelate, at the monastery where he was to be a scholar and sing in the choir, and telling him that it was the large emerald in the prelate's ring that was to be kissed—"Adolf knew at once that he would never forget that kiss upon the green stone"—these are some of the things remembered with that character of myth and light upon them that predicts the full man later on. The tortured life of the young surgeon—"the memory of a dear young mother tearing her hair in despair over her dead child would never leave my mind"; the Queen Mother of Spain asking to see the hand that has wrought so much; the river from the window of the new house with its garden; the two young Hindus who had carried their dying father to the holy river and set the four posts of the stretcher into the shallow water—thus is painted the author's own portrait.

We have only to think how intimate, how scandalous, how behind the scenes this book might have been, and what greedy, slobbering mouths might therefore have hungered for the sight of it. As it stands, the whole account is easy and well bred, proceeding from a great natural intelligence and happy culture in many fields, with a basis of kindness and tender, innate charity, humor, and an immense response to life and capacity to attract life.

When, amid the horrors of conditions in Vienna after the World War, Dr. Lorenz had come back from America with funds, he figured up with interest the amount he might have been thought to owe the monastery for what he had received there, a debt he had never forgotten, nor had he forgotten also the humiliations a rude monk there had mortified him with. " 'Let me have a long and undisturbed look at the green stone in your ring,' " he said to the grateful and impressed abbot, "and kissed once more the emerald which had made such an indelible impression upon the young choir-singer. It seemed to him that the stone sparkled less than it had sixty years before. But that was due to the fact that the eyes of the old man were less sensitive to its splendor than the boy's had been. Dead things are eternal."

STARK YOUNG.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Afterthoughts on T. S. Eliot

T. S. ELIOT'S early poems are beginning to seem less cosmically important than they did in 1925, when they first appeared in a collected volume. It is harder now to admire their deliberate obscurity, and this is particularly true in the case of "The Waste Land," which has been discussed and elucidated at greater length than any other modern poem, without answering half the questions that it raises. Just what is the function in it of the drowned man, Phlebas the Phenician? Why are we told in a note that he suggests the Western asceticism of St. Augustine? Are we meant to identify Eliot himself with the Fisher King—that is, with the legendary monarch of a country that had been rendered waterless and desolate at the very moment when its king was struck with impotence for the sin of falling in love with a pagan maid? In that case, has the pagan any connection with the Russian noblewoman remembered longingly by Eliot in the first episode? The more I study the poem as a whole, the more it seems personal and arbitrary, not so much the embodiment of a great contemporary problem as a private diary written in rebuses.

On the other hand, it is quite possible that both "The Waste Land" and other poems of the same period have been partly spoiled for me by all the imitations they have called forth. Some of these are actually better than Eliot's own work, in the sense of being more sustained in mood and richer in images: he is beginning to suffer by comparison with his ablest followers. Moreover, I am beginning to doubt whether his enormous influence over his contemporaries is a just or accurate measure of his own poetical achievement. Some of the very greatest poets—Shakespeare, Milton, for example—have had a less tangible effect on other writers than anyone would judge from their personal eminence. A possible explanation is that they did their job too well: nobody else was impelled to do it again or felt sure of doing it better. Eliot, with his habit of making suggestions that he never developed and of changing every subject without exhausting it, has tempted others to continue his work. In the past, his very faults have attracted disciples.

The poems he has written since 1930, which occupy more than half of the new collected edition,[1] have been much less widely imitated. Most of them are devotional poems, a fact which many critics might assume to be connected with their indifferent quality as verse. But the connection here, which really exists, is a result of Eliot's personal reaction to his new faith. He has developed into a peculiarly doleful type of Christian, given more to describing the sorrows of this world than to celebrating the joys of the next. Even when he writes a Christmas poem, "Journey of the Magi," he fills it with lamentations—it was the worst time of the year for such a long trip, the camel men were mutinous, the inns were dirty and expensive, and the very birth of the Christ Child was "hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death." Yet this is one of Eliot's happier and more factual pieces; elsewhere he loses himself in a mist of abstract sorrows. During the last half-century there have been several distinguished Catholic poets in France, but their best works have been poems of repentance, of pity, or of abuse directed against the infidels. Eliot has simply not sinned enough to make his repentance interesting as literature. He writes poems of pity for nobody but himself, and he is too frigidly polite to abuse his enemies. His Anglo-Catholicism has so far been intellectual rather than emotional or sensuous, with the result that his religious poems have no more color than a New England sermon. As compensation for this lack of appeal to eye and touch and taste, he has tried to give his verse a more complicated music, but in achieving this effect he depends too much on simple repetition:

> Only through time time is conquered . . .
> Distracted from distraction by distraction . . .
> World not world but that which is not world . . .

But "Murder in the Cathedral"—his latest work and the only one not included in this volume—seems to show that his talents are being revived. There are still too many repeated words, too many abstract words; there is an almost terrifying absence of sensuous impressions; but there is also more energy and more deftness in meter than he has shown since "The Waste Land." The murder of Thomas Becket, which is the central incident of the play, is handled with a whole sequence of surprising effects. First the chorus chants while the Archbishop is being killed, then the four murderers come forward and excuse themselves to the audience in the language of modern politicians (and the satire here is exceptionally keen), then the First Priest asks who shall guide us now that the Church lies bereft, then finally the Third Priest, after answering that the Church is only fortified by persecution, thunders a malediction against the assassins:

> Go, weak sad men, lost erring souls, homeless
> in earth or heaven.
> Go where the sunset reddens the last gray rock
> Of Brittany, or the Gates of Hercules . . .
> Or sit and bite your nails in Aquitaine.

It is a magnificent curse, yet it forces comparison with another passage that I vastly prefer to it, the passage in "Femmes Damnées" where Baudelaire, after reporting the courtship of two Lesbians, suddenly rises in his own person and thunders against them:

> O lamentable victims, go ye down,
> Down, down the pathway to eternal hell—

In Baudelaire's passage there is no mechanical listing of countries to which the culprits might flee: Gibraltar, Morocco, Norway, Aquitaine. Instead there is indignation bursting forth in sometimes extravagant and sometimes homely metaphors; there is a warmth of feeling that makes the climax of Eliot's poetic drama seem chilly and academic. Yet "Murder in the Cathedral" is the best verse that he has written since 1922. The shorter pieces collected in this new volume make me feel for the first time that Eliot is a minor poet; that his apparent greatness was forced upon him by the weakness of his contemporaries and their yearning for a leader.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

[1] Collected Poems, 1909-35, by T. S. Eliot. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 220 pages. $2.50.

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A Letter about Jack Reed

ONE NIGHT under a staring street lamp in New York I met John Reed, poet and playboy, just back from revolutionary Russia. With him was a silent somebody who listened, smiled and afterwards recalled (in a review of a book of mine) that Jack Reed received my joyous greeting with a stiff and sorrowful approach:

"Why don't you join us? We are trying to do what you used to talk and write about."

I was embarrassed that night, not only as the street lamp and Jack's companion and Jack seemed to imply, because I was caught guilty of hypocrisy, treason or cowardice. No, not that. What held me up in that deserted side street was the sudden observation that I did not know and never before had seen the revolutionist, John Reed. I had been to Soviet Russia; I could visualize some of what Reed had gone through over there, but I could not realize that the poet and playboy could be a revolutionist. Poetry was no road into a revolution, was it? Is it? Also it occurred to me that Jack's father, not his fond mother alone, but United States Marshal C. J. Reed, the wit of Portland, Oregon, would be broken-hearted by the sad fate of his promising son. And would blame me for the tragedy.

He thought—he believed—he anxiously hoped, that gay father, that his boy was a poet, and he pledged me when Jack came roaring out of Harvard to take him on in New York and save him for poetry. I was to let him see and enjoy everybody and everything, but everything; not any one thing. "Don't let him get a conviction, like me, and become serious." C. J. Reed (through Mrs. Reed's friendship with Mrs. Francis J. Heney, by the way) joined Frank Heney in the exposure and prosecution of the big, socially prominent timber thieves, and so was well-nigh "ruined," financially and socially. He did not want the poetry kicked out of his son's life as the joy was snubbed out of his. "Keep my boy laughing," he bade me, "laughing and singing." And I tried. And here, that sad night under that blazing street light, I, the trusted friend of C. J. Reed, was seeing myself and being seen as the false failure to a father and his son. I had let the gay boy go the sad way of his witty dad. The resemblance, the strong family resemblance was so clear that I could forgive myself that night under that light and that cynical critic's smile. I could and I did. And now that I have read "John Reed,"[1] by Granville Hicks and John Stuart, I do again. That book shows how the poet became a revolutionist while playing like a boy with the tragic figures and the frightful struggle of our common economic life. It is the tale of a singing, laughing lad who happened to go out professionally and *actually saw and felt what most poets only read or* hear about. Here is the truth at work, all of it.

Granville Hicks and his researcher, Stuart, avoid the charge of propaganda, not by suppressing any facts, but precisely by gathering all the details and by setting them forth picturesquely in order; they come pretty near to presenting the truth: that the intense experience of perfectly ordinary, professional living in this our day cannot but make a revolutionary. Poetry is the way into the revolution. Hicks uses the father, mother and the promising, reckless son to make plain the unaccustomed road—for the intellectual. And he so masters the facts that he shows too, how to make a novel out of a poetical life: by facing the facts, all of them; not by "fixing" them. I always said this could be done, as Granville Hicks did, but I did not believe it. Certainly I did not believe Granville Hicks the critic could do it. And he has. As I wrote in a personal letter, this man Hicks should be worked to death. There are lots of revolutionists like Jack Reed who are unlikely candidates for fame that will become possible only by his kind of dangerous, scholarly exposure: Lenin, Stalin, for example; we've never had enough of them.

John Reed, according to this book (and as I personally know), was a swell bourgeois kid in a pioneering, well-to-do family out in young Portland, Oregon. He had a grandmother who indulged an aristocratic waywardness; and, as we all know now, a brilliant socialite father who was an idle dude till called by a muckraker to a real job. He sent his boy, the revolutionary-to-be, to swell schools and to Harvard; the very worst. And the boy was not a "good student" except where his mind was interested and his muscles engaged. Then he became a pretty good sport and an eager student in a few lines, all for social success in the exclusive clubs, in the swell sets. When he came to New York and was put in my care by my friend, his father, the reformer-wit, Jack was nothing but a bundle of fine nerves, bulging energy, overweening vanity and trembling curiosity, with an egotistical ambition to distinguish himself as a poet. As Hicks tells, I got him a magazine job, pledging him not to take it seriously; his real job was to see life and report it in prose or poetry. He made me move down to the slum where he lived with his talented gang, and watch and hear what he discovered every day and every night. That was a great time for me. Every night Jack woke me up to tell me how he had happened upon the most marvelous thing in the world: a bum, or a street walker on a bench, a dancer.—One night Jack found a weeping singer who had never been appreciated and so, deserted, was down and out; the greatest singer in the world. In the next few weeks, that crazy gang—Jack, Bob Rogers, Bobby Jones, Mabel Dodge—got all the music and dramatic critics in the greatest city in the world to give a concert for their singer, and before a mixed audience of swells, proved—well, all that that singer was found to lack was a voice. This is the only bit of poetry or folly Hicks missed. He tells how Jack discovered the I.W.W. and Bill Haywood and Emma Goldman and strike leaders and anarchists and strikes and strikers and the class struggle, all in life, and all near by. How the playboy went out and saw them, spoke for them, got arrested and lived in them. How he made a play of the Paterson strike, went to other strikes and made stories of them; went to the Mexican revolution, as I did, and not only like me, wrote articles about it, but got into the actual fighting and sang *songs about it. That is what ruined him, I guess.* Hicks shows that Jack developed contempt for our great World War, bummed around the outskirts of it, flouting it on occasion; till he gets into the Russian Revolution, which he recognized and joined. Yes, the adventurer-reporter could and he did join the Soviet Communists; they were fighting for a purpose, the purpose he and the American and the Mexican workers, peasants, "bandits" he had chummed with, suffered with and aspired with, had struck for. *This* was his war, and he had always seen and said and written that the great World War was not "our war."

The marvelous Hicks book really shows how a poet can and is bound to turn poetry into dire deeds, and a poet of our days can and is bound to turn into a hero, a revolutionist fit to be buried under the Kremlin.

LINCOLN STEFFENS.

[1] Published by the Macmillan Company at $3.50. The book was reviewed by Malcolm Cowley in the issue of April 22.

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Social Masks and Social Facts

The Symbols of Government, by Thurman W. Arnold. New Haven: Yale University Press. 284 pages. $2.50.

THIS IS a wise, paradoxical and dangerous book. Basing himself upon a realistic analysis of legal procedures, the author defends the thesis that all social principles and ceremonies are the dramatic symbols behind which, and despite which, the world's dirty but useful work gets done. He holds that no enlightened philosophy has ever been applied to human affairs without betraying its own ideals and violating the liberal impulses that originally were the source of its passionate drive. Social and legal theories are compensatory techniques enabling us to gloss over the contradictions between what we say and what we do. Those who are most dangerous to mankind are not the realistic statesmen, politicians and men of action, but the idealistic dreamers and system-makers who believe that social institutions should embody ideals and values, when as a matter of fact they are practical devices by which men try to eat their cake and have it too. A sober glance at history, the author asserts, "indicates that great constructive achievements in human organization have been accomplished by unscrupulous men who have violated most of the principles we cherish." The creation of our industrial empire is cited as a case in point.

The detailed evidence presented by Professor Arnold for the above position is drawn from the field of law. Here the fiction obtains that each case is theoretically adjudicable by a consistent set of antecedently existing legal principles, whereas, in fact, the legal principles invoked are largely irrelevant to the actual issues in dispute, and can always be shown to be logically incompatible with another set of principles marshaled by those whose interests are defeated. But even in the discussion of the role of legal mythology, the limitations of the analysis are apparent. Granted that principles are mechanically imposed upon new situations as they arise and that decisions depend upon many factors having precious little to do with the theories professed. This does not mean that principles, even when they function as rationalizations, have no effect upon how situations are handled; nor does it justify an oversimplified realism which suggests that decisions are possible without committing us to *some* principles. Further, the admission that general principles can never by themselves decide particular cases does not entail the view that decisions are necessarily arbitrary. Every intelligent decision (or action) in fresh situations commits us to a *new* presumptive principle, essential to prediction, security and control. And since subsequent situations are never *completely* novel, we have a basis for the evaluation and modification of principles.

To the important question of what actually determines the social decisions men make, once we disallow the influence of ideology, the author offers no answer. He recognizes that contradictory principles may reflect concrete oppositions of social interests, but he has worked out no theory of the nature, origin and resolution of social interests. In his view, the only thing we can safely predict about the future is that men will continue to make excuses (theories) to themselves for not doing what they intended to do. Everything else, including what they actually do, is haphazard.

Generalize the author's position and note what it commits him to. Democracy necessarily leads to inconsistencies in practice: the same is true for dictatorships. They differ, then, only as verbal patterns. What needs must be done, will be done. Social philosophies are differently colored

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species of eyewash. "Marvels of coöperation and order out of chaos followed the dictatorships in Russia, Germany and Italy." History judges only by results.

It is not surprising therefore that the author is shocked by the consequences of his own shrewd hard-boiled "realism." In an effort to escape complete social skepticism, he concludes not with an appeal for a particular philosophy or program but with the hope that "a competent, practical, opportunistic, governing class might rise to power." *How* it rises to power is presumably an unimportant detail so long as it regards governing as a realistic job of making a slightly mad, symbol-loving mankind a little more comfortable. Unfortunately for Arnold's thesis, every ruling class sooner or later defines its task in this way. But that does not make its rule any more tolerable. And it is precisely because of the consequences of its "practical" rule that the principles of the "fanatics" and "idealists" catch hold upon the masses.

Our choice is not limited to the unprincipled politician or the dogmatic visionary. Principles are always important because they make a difference, but the way principles are held is even more important. True, there is no test aside from consequences, but what is tested in human affairs is not merely the efficacy of techniques but the relative worth of values and principles. SIDNEY HOOK.

Poet among the Planets

Biography of Percival Lowell, by A. Lawrence Lowell. New York: The Macmillan Company. 221 pages. $3.

ABBOT LAWRENCE LOWELL'S biography of his brother Percival illustrates the disruptive influences of communistic modes of life upon the family. For many generations the Lowell family have had a private soviet of their own. They have been economically secure, and this freedom has enabled them to develop eccentricities of genius and anfractuosities of temperament not permissible among those who live under a more competitive system. They also escaped the tooth-and-nail clannishness inevitable among those families that have no mill towns named after them. Within this same family circle we find extremely varied types with little essential similarity among them. For this reason Abbot Lawrence Lowell apparently did not understand his brother well. His biography is disappointing as a personal portrait.

Abbot Lawrence spent the best years of his life in the center of the intellectual incubator known as Harvard, clucking, brooding and hatching eggs of thought fertilized by others. Such an effort is very useful. Unfortunately it encourages a broody gallinaceous cast of mind through the defects of its virtues. A. L. Lowell had no sympathy with the scarlet-tanager flight of his sister Amy, or the hummingbird quivering of his brother Percival.

Percival Lowell had a restlessness that impelled him to pioneer in Japan and Korea, and a sympathetic insight that gained him access to ceremonies and shrines usually forbidden even to the Japanese themselves. Abbot Lowell does not understand what made this possible, and instead of using his brother's writings to explain the temperament of the man, he gives excerpts to establish their scholarship. This is missing the point entirely. "The Soul of the Orient," a book that inspired Lafcadio Hearn, is accurate and deep, but also the breath of life is in it. A Marco Polo with an eye for color is more important than a whole expedition of overtrained archeologists.

In describing the astronomical career of his brother Per-

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cival, A. L. Lowell leaves out that Galileolike quality of imagination which vitalized the achievements and speculations that will always be associated with the man. A disproportionate amount of space is given to an account of the technical phases of Percival's investigation, several consecutive chapters reading less like a biography than like a textbook in celestial mechanics. Percival Lowell was probably most definitely himself when his keen eyes peered through the telescope looking for canals on Mars, but the average reader has no need to understand the mathematical formulas guiding him. Very shortly after Percival Lowell's death the observatory he had endowed at Flagstaff, Arizona, was able to announce the discovery of Pluto, the new planet he had predicted, and this is a triumph that stimulates Abbot Lawrence Lowell, since it proves the validity of institutions as such. But his biography makes little attempt to analyze its subject's personality or give us a clue to his private life. Percival Lowell was a man of rare imagination and sensitivity, and these qualities gave the products of his scholarship their chief value. Abbot Lawrence Lowell tries to prove that he was as class-conscious a scholar as any other member of the Lowell family—in short that he was always academically sound and institutionally correct.

JOE GOULD.

Yankee in Havana

Cuban Side Show, by R. Hart Phillips. Havana: Cuban Press. 318 pages. $2.25.

THE WIFE of the New York Times correspondent, in this curious hard-bitten account of Cuban events from the downfall of Machado to the present, reveals the typical mental traits of permanent middle-class emigrées. She has lived ten years among the Cubans without acquiring any intimate knowledge of their inner social life or the significance of their customs. In the tragic moments of revolutionary disturbances, she is more concerned emotionally over the sufferings of a goat bleating in a *guagua* or the stealing of a chair from her front porch than in the tribulations of a nation.

Her book bristles with inconsistencies, for it has little economic, anthropological or historical perspective. No Cuban has any patriotism, she declares repeatedly, but in attacking them she unconsciously gives example after example of their strong patriotic feeling. At the outset, she says that "no Anglo-Saxon can ever fathom the mind of a Cuban," which automatically bars her from writing a word; in the next breath declares that only Americans are capable of governing Cuba; then a little later asks, "When will we have a government in the United States who [sic] understands Cubans?" Quite effectively she shows that we have blundered from first to last in our relations with Cuba, that we are congenitally unable to deal with Latin countries.

Such matters, plus Mrs. Phillips' super-Americanism, hatred of Negroes, etc., would seem to damn her book completely. And yet it is a useful account, in spots vivid and dramatic, filled with racy rumors and anecdotes, especially well told when they discredit the Cubans. And if the book is devoid of human charity, Mrs. Phillips thereby avoids the pitfalls of those who dote on the picturesque. She so bluntly gives vent to her irritated feelings that the book is also valuable as exposing the type of mind which too often purveys news to the American public (she herself is correspondent for the North American Newspaper Alliance). But just because she is such an ardent imperialist, seeing

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CARLETON BEALS.

Alma Mater

Alma Mater: The Gothic Age of the American College, by Henry Seidel Canby. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. 359 pages. $2.50.

MR. CANBY writes pleasantly of the 1890's, the Gothic Age of his Alma Mater, when the colonial architecture of the college was giving way to the pretentious Tudor-Gothic of the university, when the students were barbarians in Matthew Arnold's sense, distinguished for good looks, good manners and addiction to outdoor sports. He recalls with zest the romance of college life, "education preferred" as opposed to the common stock issued by the institution in its classrooms; and estimates without exaggeration the influence of the collegiate product upon the cultural and political history of the country.

Mr. Canby writes as a Yale man, and undoubtedly in these years Yale was the most typical of the older colleges. Its phenomena in collegiate dress, addiction to athletics and "activities," relentless hostility to things of the mind, preservation of interesting fossil types in the faculty, and loyalty to "dear old Yale," set the standard adopted widely throughout the colleges of New England and the Middle West. At Harvard the elective system had partly fulfilled the hope of Eliot that freedom of choice would release intellectual interests—but only partly. Still, there was at the time of which Mr. Canby writes a truce in the war between college masses and classes, and life at Harvard was shaded by a certain pale cast of thought known as Harvard indifference. In those days George Santayana visited New Haven, and wrote in The Harvard Monthly of Gothic sport at Yale: "It seems to embody a primal instinct, to be a symbol of all the prehistoric struggles of our earth-born race. . . . The simple glory of the savage world returns as in a dream." He spoke of the Yale spirit, expressed in its vocabulary, " 'hustle'—a contagion of energy, and 'get there'—a reckless love of success." But that spirit, he admits, was one befitting a youthful nation. At Yale everything was "arranged to produce a certain type of man," who in contrast to his Harvard contemporary showed a "greater fitness to present conditions," and contributed more largely to the tradition of our national character.

Mr. Canby, with a perspective of forty years, makes the same affirmation of the education of college life. "I do not see how a better education could have been contrived for a youth that wanted the wealth, the position, the individual power that was being worshiped just then in America." Such an education paid an immediate return in happiness, and indefinite dividends in friendships, memories and loyalties to be revived by the participants as alumni. He sees clearly also the failure of such education to prepare men to face a future involving larger issues than individual success or the endowment of the old college. "We were prepared to create a trust or organize a war, not to control the one for human uses and to stop the other before it began." Altogether Mr. Canby's book makes for sympathy with the present generation of college students in their effort, still

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to a considerable extent self-directed, to learn how to deal with a world which shows on every hand the effects of the looting of the Goths. ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Books in Brief

China Changes, by Gerald J. Yorke. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 334 pages, illustrated. $2.50.

THIS English journalist was Reuter's correspondent during three military campaigns—the Japanese occupation of Jehol, the 1933 campaign against the Chinese Soviet state in Kiangsi, and the Fukien revolt against the Nationalist government. The new note of appreciative tolerance toward Chinese life, now common in foreign books about China (except Japanese books) and reflecting the dwindling strength of European and American imperialism in the East, is to be found in his writing. It is readable, ambling and inconclusive. Though he thinks that the Chinese Soviets provided the only honest government the country has known, he denies their hold on the masses. He has taken over, almost verbally, Trotsky's analysis of the situation. Himself apparently without political conviction, he settles his faith on Chiang Kai-shek, on principles similar to those held by some admirers of Hearst who are in awe over what he gets away with. I. S.

Heredity and the Ascent of Man, by C. C. Hurst. New York: The Macmillan Company. 147 pages. $1.50.

The gene, submicroscopic carrier of the physically determined traits of a living organism, is likely to become the central problem of biological science. In this short book, Dr. Hurst attempts to familiarize the general reader with the mechanics of heredity. Most of his space is devoted to the fundamental concepts of Genetics: cell development, the chromosomes and the astounding complexity of gene activity. In his philosophy Dr. Hurst tends to the mystical: from the virtual immortality of the gene he infers that "the far-distant and remote successors of Man may . . . be independent and largely free of matter, with infinite possibilities of future progress notwithstanding the complete dissolution of the universe." H. W.

A Novel About a White Man and a Black Man in the Deep South, by James Saxon Childers. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

". . . after all the obvious barriers are down, there still remains a curtain of some kind between a white man and a black man." It is not a theoretical problem in sociology which one of Mr. Childers' characters summarizes in those words, but rather the human, personal story of two intelligent and sensitive men who tried to rise above the senseless prejudices in which they had been born and reared. At a Northern university Dave, the black man, and Gordon, the white man, had been sincere and natural friends. But their attempt to resume this friendship in Birmingham, Alabama, which was Gordon's home and where Dave had come to teach in a Negro college, brought suffering and disgrace to both of them. And after their mutual tragedy they were no longer friends, but constrained and uncomfortable acquaintances. Mr. Childers' theme is a delicate one and in his attempt to deal with it impartially he too often sacrifices dramatic unity to accuracy of detail. Yet his courage, his sanity and his honesty make his novel a genuine contribution to a problem that any intelligent Southerner, whatever his color, is forced to face. G. A.

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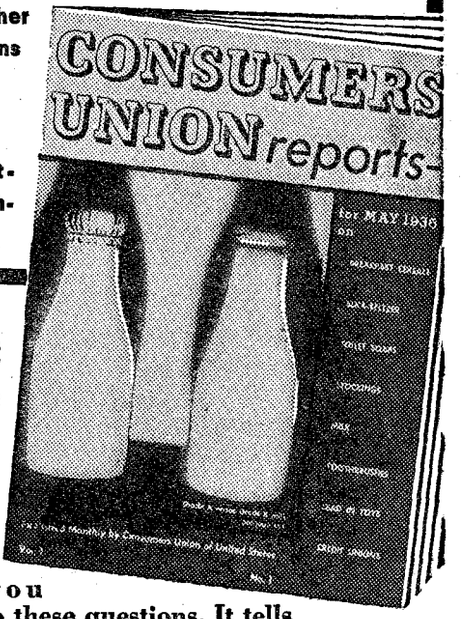

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Contributors

ROBERT CANTWELL, author of "Laugh and Lie Down" and "The Land of Plenty," is working on a new novel which has the San Francisco general strike as its setting.

LOUIS FISCHER is the author of a number of books and articles dealing with the Soviet Union, where he has lived a good part of the time since 1922. He was formerly correspondent of The Daily Herald of London and has contributed regularly to The Nation, Current History and other periodicals. He recently made a tour of Europe, studying contemporary conditions in many countries.

JONATHAN MITCHELL has written many articles on politics and international affairs. He now makes his home in Washington, D. C.

LINCOLN STEFFENS was credited by John Reed with being one of the two persons who had exerted the most influence on Reed's political thought and actions. Steffens, who has had a long and distinguished career as a journalist and crusader for progressive causes, now lives in Carmel, California.

SIDNEY HOOK, chairman of the Department of Philosophy, Washington Square College, New York University, and lecturer at the New School for Social Research, is the author of the forthcoming "From Hegel to Marx" and editor, with Horace M. Kallen, of "American Philosophy —Today and Tomorrow."

JOE GOULD, historian and poet, has for some years been devoting his attention to assembling a history of the world from oral sources.

CARLETON BEALS, author of "The Crime of Cuba," "Fire in the Andes" and other books, has made an intensive study of Latin American politics and sociology.

The initials signed to the brief reviews are those of Isidor Schneider, Harold Ward and Grace Adams.

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